The Future of Cities in Britain and Canada

Edited by
Ian Jackson

THE FUTURE OF CITIES IN BRITAIN AND CANADA

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The Future of Cities in Britain and Canada

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Val Morin, Quebec
Canada

Edited by
IAN JACKSON

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Preface

David Crombie

Towards the end of the colloquium that is reported in this volume, one of the participants made an unexpected but significant remark. As a senior member of the planning staff for the city of Montreal, he had found that one of the main benefits of the meeting had been what he had learned about Toronto's problems and the way that these are being tackled.

It is indeed difficult to keep up with what is happening in cities other than one's own, even within the same country. The major crises are reported, and we notice the larger changes when we have occasion to visit other cities. Whether we are elected urban politicians or appointed administrators, it is however obvious that we tackle situations in our individual cities that are both distinctive and similar to those elsewhere. We realize that some of the answers may have already been found; all of us may be busy inventing wheels that are likely to look very similar to one another. But often there seems to be nothing we can do to avoid this duplication of effort.

There are just too many cities, and too little time. Some problems may be unique to big cities and, within Canada, Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver may do their best to keep up with one another. But many of the wheels that are being invented are likely to be independent of city size; the answer to what is troubling an urban planner in Toronto may have been found in Red Deer, or Trois Rivières, or Saint John.

Or perhaps in Leeds, or Stuttgart, or Singapore. Put two or three urban planners together, or two or three mayors or councillors, and they will rapidly find they have much in common, and much to share. They may

agree to stay in touch, and with phones, faxes, modems and a large amount of luck, they may do so. But such links are primarily congenial; they are not an efficient way to tap the creative thinking on urban issues that is going on throughout the world.

An efficient mechanism of this kind does not, in fact, appear to exist. Other areas of knowledge, from chemistry to law, seem to be much further ahead in creating information exchange systems than is the urban scene. True, we also have our professional associations, our conventions and other meetings, our journals, and our databases. But somehow they do not seem to be as central to our work as similar systems appear to be in other fields.

Perhaps the fault is in ourselves. It is all too easy to think of the problems of our own city as distinctive, *sui generis*, like no one else's. There may also be a touch of macho pride in all of us: we would rather solve our own problems ourselves. We do not want to be told that a ready-made solution – or at least a novel approach – already exists somewhere else. We were elected, or hired, to find answers, not to go off to search for someone else's answers. Mostly, however, I suspect that we are defeated by the numbers involved. There are, for example more than a dozen cities in Canada with populations of a quarter of a million or more, and more than twice as many in the United Kingdom. How many in the USA, or Western Europe, or the world? Maybe, in the contemporary world, it is after all likely to be faster to invent our own wheel than to try to find out whether it already exists somewhere.

That may be true, but the sixth Canada-U.K. colloquium, convened during the first snowfall of the 1990-91 winter in the Laurentian hills north of Montreal, was a step toward something better. Those who devised the colloquia series were convinced of the value of

> *discussion between persons sharing a common political, economic, social and cultural heritage from two different countries sharing similar but not identical problems.*

The future of British and Canadian towns and cities certainly proved an appropriate topic.

Looking back on the colloquium from a Canadian perspective, and re-reading the papers assembled in the present volume, one of my main impressions is that the 1980s have been much more challenging, and perhaps therefore more productive, for British cities than for their Canadian counterparts. This seems particularly evident in regard to urban government. As Rodney Brooke vigorously demonstrates, Mrs Thatcher's challenge has produced a response that she may welcome, but could scarcely have anticipated. Urban financing, municipal government powers, and the roles of elected and appointed officials have all changed profoundly within the space of a decade. I would not want to conclude

that some similar external *deus* (or, in this case, *dea*!) *ex machina* is needed for a similar revitalization of Canadian urban government. Nevertheless, the effect on British urban government of both Mrs Thatcher and the European Community was communicated very effectively to the Canadian participants by their British colleagues.

I imagine that the other participants, like me, will see the appearance of this volume of papers as relieving them of a certain amount of guilt. A successful colloquium demands that the number participating in it must be restricted; all of us were well aware that we were fortunate to have been invited, since so many others would have liked to be there, and would have both contributed and gained much. I hope that this volume does convey some of the energy and enthusiasm of the discussions, and I believe that the urban communities in Canada and the United Kingdom should search for a way to make such dialogue a regular and frequent event. We have much to learn from one another.

The unusual organizational arrangements for this annual colloquium account for some of its originality. It is the offspring of a unique partnership: on the Canadian side the Institute for Research on Public Policy has since 1986 had responsibility for arranging Canadian input to both planning and organization. Our British partner, the Canada-U.K. Colloquia – British Committee has been established as an independent entity specifically to carry out similar responsibilities on the British side.

In past years, colloquia have covered an interesting range of contemporary problems common to the two countries: social policy in 1986, privatization in 1987, post-secondary education in 1988, and the state of Anglo-Canadian relations in 1984 and again in 1989. The 1990 colloquium on the future of cities confirmed the validity of the founding concept – that there is value in building intellectual bridges and that we gain insight into our own problems by discussion how others who share those problems have dealt with them. In 1991 a colloquium on environmental issues is being planned.

The meeting could not have been held without financial help from others. The Canada-U.K. Colloquia – British Committee and the Institute for Research on Public Policy wish to record their thanks for the generous support received from organizations including the following: Canadian Department of External Affairs, United Kingdom Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Bombardier, Inc., Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, Chancellor Insurance Ltd., Canadian Airlines International Ltd., and Unimédia Inc.

In closing, I would like to record my thanks to Ian Jackson of the Institute for Research on Public Policy, who has assumed responsibility for editing this stimulating and informative collection of papers.

DAVID CROMBIE
Toronto

1 Cities and Communication: The Necessary, the Possible, the Likely

John Hall

Introduction

I begin with an apology. I am not a technical expert on transport, communications, or land-use/transportation planning. I therefore have the unwitting confidence of the non-expert, the freedom to mix broad sweep with anecdotal evidence. I can ask more questions than I can answer. But by instinct, by earlier vocation as a geographer, and by virtue of now serving London boroughs of varied political and physical characteristics, I will seek some connections across specialities and across culturally and politically defined places. By being given the first slot in the discussion programme of the colloquium I can guarantee that several of the themes that I mention will be developed more fully during the proceedings.

Much of the paper concentrates on London, which by virtue of its size, functions and dominance well deserves the label 'world city'. But I make passing reference to other places, especially in mainland Europe and North America. Communications I view in the widest sense: the physical movement of people and goods, and the electronic transfer of voices, images and data. I do not make predictions about the twenty-first century, knowing that whatever is anticipated will never work out quite as expected even a decade ahead. Rather, I seek pointers.

What will be taken into the next century is a new content for evaluation frameworks that is gaining acceptability across the globe. In the past, major investment decisions were evaluated in three ways. Was the proposed development technically feasible: would it work? Was it legally

permissible? Was it financially rewarding? (Notice that I am not saying 'profitable', for major transport infrastructure undertakings characteristically have been funded by a mixture of public and private capital with a payback period of up to 60 years, their revenues supplemented by grants to nationalized or municipalized ownerships.)

In the 1990s we have caught up with Walter Firey, who in the 1960s proposed a framework for decision-making which incorporated the 'three Es'. First, is the proposed development economically gainful/profitable? Secondly, is it ethnologically (or, more simply put, socially or politically) acceptable? (The 1960s were a decade in which pressure group politics and participatory democratic impulses were increasing in magnitude.) And thirdly, is it ecologically reversible, or, as we now ask, sustainable? For the final decade of this century and after, I would now add a fourth 'E', that of energy. Is the development using renewable or non-renewable sources of energy; maybe also adding dangerously to global warming? In this respect, the difference between North America and Western Europe may be acute: Byrne and Rich (1990) report that the least energy-intensive American city, New York City, consumes 26 times as much energy for transport as the 'typical European city'.

The urban transport problem

Hardly a day goes by in London without one of the more serious national newspapers carrying a feature article or letter deploring the state of transport in the metropolis. The complaints are principally about congestion on the roads and in overground and underground rail services; cancellations or delays in these services; a feared decline of safety standards on public transport; and the discomfort of peak-hour travel in overcrowded rail carriages.

Taking a simple measure of congestion, road journey speeds, the average in central London is now 17 kph (11 mph) compared with 13 kph (8 mph) in 1912. But whereas road congestion was once limited largely to the 'rush hours' (crush hours?), it now persists throughout the working day. Newspaper headlines in the later 1980s have described the near-total standstill to which central London has been prey on winter evenings between November and February. Even in the suburbs, as car ownership has risen, we have become all-too-familiar with that dread North American phenomenon: gridlock. The proportion of London households owning one or more cars has risen from 46% to 60% between 1971 and 1988/89, and is projected to rise to between 64% and 68% by 2001. North American colleagues will doubtless find these levels low.

Concern about road congestion is not new, of course. In the 1960s, the prophetic Buchanan report on Traffic in Towns described the car as a 'monster of great potential destructiveness [of the environment]'. Means

of making its presence more acceptable, both visually and in safety terms, in a variety of settings from capital to cathedral city and small town were demonstrated. Nevertheless, vehicular sclerosis is now more acute than ever.

As for the railway services, both British Rail's Network SouthEast (NSE) and London Transport's underground services (LUL) have encountered an unexpected increase in passengers entering central London since about 1982-83. Overcrowding has been made less bearable by the antiquity of the system and the rolling stock. Indeed, while meeting in London in November 1990 the International Metropolitan Railways Committee of the IUPT/UIPT could join in celebrations of the centenary of the opening of the world's first deep underground tube railway in London. We envy those cities which developed or extended their networks more recently, although they too will face rising costs as their systems age.

Cancellations and delays occur not just because of the antiquity of the system. Big cities have difficulties in recruiting and retaining staff to run public transport systems, for the working hours required are often unsociable, the pay offered is lower than in the private sector, and housing costs are higher. Safety issues have been highlighted in London by two major accidents, the one of an escalator fire at King's Cross underground station in 1987, and the other of a disastrous collision of NSE trains on the approach to Clapham Junction in south London in 1988. Personal safety issues are familiar on all rail networks: women in particular might feel vulnerable to abuse or attack, especially on remoter lines outside peak hours.

With the most recent oil price shock of 1990, we are reminded of the 1973/74 price rise which led some western European nations to introduce petrol rationing and restrictions on cars, such as by limiting use to those bearing odd- or even-numbered plates on alternate weekends. There is a rekindled interest in the energy efficiency of different modes of transport. Public transport cannot be bettered as a means of getting people to clustered workplaces or major leisure venues in city centres. It performs less well, however, as functions become dispersed, and as non-radial movements become more important.

Throughout the 1990s there will be growing attention to the polluting effects of growing vehicle ownership and use. Big cities, such as London, are mindful of the dangers to public health and even to buildings within the city. Having rid the atmosphere of harmful sulphurous fumes and soot from coal-burning chimneys in the 1950s and 1960s, British cities face the challenge of invisible exhaust gases and fine particulate matter from vehicles. A decade ago, the concern was mainly for human health. Now the concern is for the health and maintenance of this small planet, as the forebodings of environmental writers of the 1960s and 1970s are given new

impetus in the form of warnings about global warming, and about the export of exhaust gases from one place which become acid rain in another.

Current and prospective responses to the problems

Once upon a time, which is to say no more than 10 or 20 years ago, the response to growing levels of car ownership and use was to propose the construction of more roads, especially of inter-urban motorways, although intra-urban limited access highways were also on the agenda. In the case of congested sections of the national road network in Britain, especially the M1 and M6 motorways between London, Birmingham and the north, relief through new construction is still being contemplated.

Within cities, the era of large-scale motorway construction appears over. London, however, never succumbed. Mindful of the approaching London borough elections in May 1990, even modest proposals for selective road improvements around the central area and across the suburbs were rejected by central government a year ago. Politicians are now able to adduce academic evidence in support of their in-built desire to safeguard their electors from road construction in what have often been seen as electorally marginal constituencies. The new prop is the Mogridge dictum: new road space simply passes the bottleneck along and rarely leads to any noticeable increase in overall traffic speeds.

In the 1950s and 1960s, first in North America and then in Europe, there arose the new speciality of land-use/transportation planners whose basic tenet was that traffic generation is a function of land use. By arranging land uses in a more orderly way, traffic flows could be regulated, it was said. But in the mid-1980s, in London especially, we witnessed a pell-mell urge by developers to renew and expand office floorspace, sometimes in proximity to important railway stations, sometimes in areas inadequately served by public transport. London has lacked a consistent view of the relationship between transport infrastructure and economic growth within the city. Even where otherwise unprecedented powers and funds for infrastructure have been available, as in the London Docklands urban development area and its enterprise zone, major commercial centre developments such as at Canary Wharf have outpaced initially the road and rail network improvements that will be vital for their eventual success.

Interestingly, it is the private sector which currently is complaining most bitterly about this state of affairs. For example, at the prompting of the governor of the Bank of England, at the geographical and functional heart of the City of London, a City Commuter Services Group was formed in 1987 so that employers in the financial services sector could express their views on the adequacy of commuter services. The City of London Corporation, which administers public services in the same financially-dominated 'square mile' at the heart of the metropolis itself,

published in 1990 a detailed report on the urgent need to upgrade the commuter services which each day funnel some 300,000 workers into the City.

Several major developers and surveyors are requesting the formulation of a development blueprint for central London, including the City. This would be much more detailed than that countenanced by central government in its highly generalized strategic planning guidance to individual borough planning authorities. But the City and the boroughs themselves would not wish to see a return to the 'analysis paralysis' (and, should I say, 'consultation procrastination'?) that attended the preparation of the unwieldy and slow-moving Greater London Development Plan in the days of the now-defunct Greater London Council.

What further responses are possible? Road congestion on selected major arteries in London is to be attacked through the device of 'red routes', along which parking restrictions will be enforced most stringently in order that journey speeds can rise. A similar scheme operates already in central Paris (where the boulevards are generally much wider, however).

In Britain generally, and London specifically, we have not embraced the wholehearted enthusiasm for car pooling and park-and-ride schemes that have been adopted elsewhere. In practice, congestion is itself the most powerful disincentive to travel by private car in the central city. Although the London Boroughs Association, amongst others, has been pressing strongly for the introduction of an experimental road pricing scheme in London, this is firmly resisted by central government. Indeed, the private motorist is often cosseted by an employer's offer of a company-assisted car lease scheme, maybe even a petrol allowance, and often most valuable of all, an off-street parking place. An estimated 7% of cars in London are 'company cars', the same proportion as in the country as a whole. Parisians would find that bizarre, and would point to employers there being required to subsidize commuters' season tickets instead.

Of course road pricing is not of itself a cure-all. If phased in for selected parts of urban agglomerations it has to be related to improvements in public transport. And it has to be recognized that many vehicles operating in city centres are now there of necessity. In my own office I have noticed a rising tide of vehicle trips generated to service our computer system, printers, copiers and fax machine; by caterers when we hold receptions; by builders when the fire regulations are enforced, and by couriers - never mind by our routine traffic of visiting members and advisers who are forced to come by public transport because of the difficulty of finding parking space at kerbside parking meters or in off-street car parks.

Tele-[whatever]-ing

Whenever conditions are perceived to be intolerable, individuals and firms will respond by fleeing the congested and polluted metropolis for smaller, more congenial places. The civil service seeks to relocate not just back-up functions, but complete operations away from London, partly to reduce costs, partly to ease recruitment difficulties. Private firms respond in a similar way. A specialist restorer of ceramics tells how, having built up her business networks in London, she serves her clients from a more pleasant studio/workshop in a village about two hours' drive away. Such decisions arise from the changing assessment of needs as a company or an individual matures, as new markets develop, as new life style and family needs arise.

For some, moving away from the perceived ills of the congested central city implies a shift of residence but not of work: workers still commute to their place of employment, adding to the growing tide of long-distance commuters. Such commuters are less tolerant of the need to stand throughout a train journey, and may find that the trade-off they made for cheaper housing and longer journey sours somewhat as season ticket prices rise beyond the rate of inflation. Others cut out most of the travel by substituting communications by wire and fibre-optic cable for physical travel. In recent years we have witnessed the evolution of several new species of teleworkers, teleconferencers, teleshoppers, telelearners and teleplayers. These are quite different from the more familiar self-employed people working from home, such as plumbers and electricians, and the small businesses often based in the home, such as those of self-employed accountants, architects, dressmakers or typists.

The teleworker is often nomadic during the day, and keeps in touch with an office base, or clients, by modern telecommunications: computer, fax, pager and telephone. Others are more sedentary. The best publicized examples in Britain are of programmers and systems analysts, copy editors and bibliographers, even those setting up and entering data into systems for administering our new community charge or 'poll tax'. Former IBM executives have established a home-based data processing network in the East Midlands, hoping to attract custom from cost-conscious companies in London and the South East. Newspapers reporters, always looking for the unusual or novel, write features about similar networks of teleworkers in remote Scottish crofts and villages, and some housing developers market new properties as being fully wired for home working.

British Telecom has produced a 'Guide to working from home' which lists some of the 'ups and downs'. BT estimates, incidentally, that about half a million people work permanently from home in Britain, with another 1.5 million operating from home at some time during the week - nearly one in ten of all employed people overall. Ups include savings on

travel time (an average of 15 hours per person per week) and travel costs (in a recent study by the Henley Centre for Forecasting, annual commuting expenditure is estimated to be £3.6 billion per annum: up to £3,000 per person). There is flexibility in the choice of working hours, especially useful for those with caring responsibilities. Productivity gains of between 30 and 100% compared with the usual interruption-prone office have been claimed by the Henley Centre for Forecasting. And teleworkers can reduce their spending on city outfits, city sandwich bars, and other more expensive lures.

What they may find is a sense of isolation, a reduced ability to gauge colleagues' reactions, a loss of support from a well-resourced team, maybe even resentment from their immediate family over the intrusive effects of work on the home. Nevertheless a gradual adoption of home-based teleworking is in prospect. I am writing this paper at home on a word processor, of course, but outside office hours: my formal diary and the pattern of informal requests coming into the office are not conducive to sustained creativity. What I have not yet addressed is how much of my daily or weekly routine could be better undertaken at home - still in touch with the office by telephone, and conceivably by modem. Let us assume that, in two years' time, I might work from home one day a fortnight. That means two fewer trips to my central London office and back on that day, but I could conceivably make two or more additional local trips: I might take a break from the VDU screen to take a suit to the cleaners, normally out of bounds as it opens 45 minutes after I have set out for work, or to consult some reference works in the library. In other words, I might substitute local trips by car for longer-distance trips on the underground. The principal advantages, besides saving nearly three hours in the day, is that of being able to plan the day totally, and to choose the quietest time of day for any local trips of the kind described.

Now all this might be fine if, on the days in question, I can rely on colleagues to get on with their work unsupervised (which in fact I can), or if they can rely on my being available on the telephone (which again they can). But for managers who are not in this position, or for employees who need direct, proximate supervision, and who in any case are unaccustomed to taking work home (or do not wish to) teleworking is not an immediate option. As is so often the case, technological capacity runs ahead of our social organization in the workplace. Can our management hierarchies adapt? Is it acceptable that some colleagues will be allowed, even encouraged, to become teleworkers, and others not? The Future of Work Group at the Polytechnic of Central London is as yet unconvinced by our ability to effect widespread attitudinal changes. Nevertheless, an Industrial Relations Services report in 1988 claimed that 25% of those surveyed in south-east England working for Hampshire County Council, ICL and Honeywell Bull expressed a positive interest in teleworking. The Confederation of British Industry has strongly urged member businesses

to encourage homeworking by telecommunications to save business overheads and workers' time and energy.

In the main, I have so far been describing employees. But there is ample evidence that teleworking for the self-employed is an increasingly attractive way of working for many people. In 1987 self-employment in Britain was estimated to apply to about one in ten employed adults. It may already have grown to about one in seven. In some cases the growth has been enforced by redundancy or caring needs, and the ever-present pressure for all adults in a household or family to contribute an income. But whereas in the past we talked of 'going out to work', it is now possible for some to say 'I'm staying home to work'.

There are further kinds of telecommunications-based substitutes for travel, all capable of significant future growth as new channels are installed, and as the real cost of telephone calls further falls. Teleconferencing is now well established. Audio conferencing has been supplemented by video conferencing. Both seem a more sensible use of time than, say, spending 12 hours on the road and in the air from London to participate in a 45-minute meeting in Brussels, especially if the schedule does not allow a pause for refreshment on the sunny terrace of a *Grand Place* café. Yet we still often need the reassurance that can only be given by meeting face-to-face, by the confirming handshake. Indeed, I would suggest that as negotiations of many kinds become more complex – Prof. Jean Gottmann introduced the term the 'transactional society' some years ago – the need for direct meetings grows rather than diminishes. This would certainly be the case if, as several have suggested, advanced economies in the post-Fordist era become dominated by personalized services.

Teleshopping is more familiar to the French than the British. It requires access to a videotex system. It is reported that in France the Télétel service, dominated by Minitel, now has 5.2 million installed terminals (February 1990). In contrast, the Prestel service in Britain had achieved only 155,000 terminals by 1990, eleven years after its launch. Certainly the French system has reached a critical mass. As ever, the French enthusiasm for new technology is apparent. As yet, teleshopping is much less significant than mail order shopping. The latter has traditionally been linked with purchase on credit, although the 'Next' chain recently tried to attract higher income groups by offering greater convenience through the catalogue than the high street mid-day or weekend scrum. We are as yet backward in Britain in adopting the available technology to ease what is called 'pressure shopping' – the mad dash in the car to the supermarket for the week's provisions. (Few supermarkets in Britain remain open after 8 or 9 p.m., and maybe 6 or 7 p.m. on Saturdays; most are closed on Sundays.) There have been interesting teleshopping experiments, however, notably in Bradford and the London Docklands, to assist the pensioner, the housebound and the

disabled to order goods for delivery to their home. Presumably a return to the modern-day equivalent of the grocer's boy on a bicycle would allow more time to be spent on 'leisure shopping', which in the prosperous centres towards to the edge of London and beyond can indeed become pleasure shopping.

A further variety of tele-activity is telelearning. Distance learning is the more familiar phrase: for me it conjures up an image of the rudiments of agricultural science being relayed to scattered farmsteads in New Zealand or Saskatchewan. In the 1970s it was developed further in Britain by the Open University, the 'university of the air'. In the 1990s we hear of developments in interactive distance learning across western Europe using the Olympus satellite. The European Community is sponsoring various initiatives to improve the networking of its research and vocational training programmes. Getting the hardware to work, albeit fiendishly difficult, is as naught compared with getting agreement about who should do what and who should pay for it.

Individual cities and regions may be considering how to improve commercial services and even enhance social life by means of the new telecommunications technologies. In fact 'Cities and new technologies' was the subject of an international conference in Paris in November 1990 supported by the OECD. Doubtless delegates will have heard how the Ile de France region around Paris has elaborated a strategy for developing 'teleports' with linked information networks, so putting the region ahead of most others in Europe in the widespread availability of information-based services, although similar services are being developed in the London Docklands. After the 'intelligent building' comes the 'intelligent city'. Politicians will also be interested in how telecommunications could be used to better gauge public responses to policy proposals and spending propositions, even just to find out more about what services a city council can offer to its citizens. With respect to the latter, the City of Montreal has introduced '*Accés Montréal*' whereby telephone calls can be used to make requests and suggestions, pay parking tickets, get snow cleared, register births, even execute real estate contracts. Consultations, information and transactions of the kind described are undertaken from thirteen neighbourhood offices in the city, whereas only two years ago all services were concentrated in the city hall.

Will telecommunications oust carriageways, railways and airways?

So far I have described the latest version of the urban transport problem: congestion, pollution and energy considerations predominate. A century ago in London, it should be recalled, the main threat was the volume of horse manure that would have to be shifted if traffic rose inexorably. On the other side of the equation is a world of dazzling technological

capabilities. Will wire, cable, and satellite links render a significant volume of trips on roads, railways and airways obsolete? Judging from previous experience, I suggest that the answer is 'No'. The new communications channels are likely to add to the total volume of interactions, not to reduce seriously existing levels.

Further, whatever new means of communication are introduced, they tend to reinforce the ranking within the existing urban hierarchy. If all roads lead to Rome, so all telephone links lead to London, it would seem. Generally speaking, national and provincial capitals have the greatest density of connections to road, rail and air networks. They dominate in telephone traffic, computer installations, television and radio production. To understand why, we only need to recall what big cities exist for. They are market places, built on the human need to exchange goods and services. London and Montreal are trading cities, once with predominant maritime trade, now with the whole variety of networks just described. They trade in ideas, fashion: what economic historians used to call 'conspicuous consumption', what the advertising world now calls 'life-style concepts'.

And how do the biggest cities portray themselves? Not just as capitals for the circulation of capital, or the aggrandizement of commerce, but as repositories of a vibrant culture. 'Glasgow: cultural capital of Europe' is a slogan familiar within Britain during 1990. The cultural menu extends from grand opera with champagne in the crush bar to alternative comedians standing before pint pots of ale in public bars. The street itself becomes theatre, the city itself becomes *tableau vivant*. In order to retain their economic and political dominance as commercial and manufacturing activities are decentralized to lower cost regions – or even dispersed to lower cost nations – the big cities are promoting their cultural richness as a major attraction that cannot easily be replicated in greener, quieter, less aggressive smaller places.

So the big city becomes less a warehouse for goods, or a marketplace for financial services, and more a proving ground for ideas, the repository of a whole variety of artistic, cultural and educational activities that can be consumed by residents, tourists and business visitors alike. In this view, the big city is a sieve, shaking out new talent, which offers not just a critical mass in terms of the size of its market, but a mass of critics of the old and new orders. This is the city in which underground movements become mainstream, in which ethnic diversity becomes more a cause for celebration than anxiety. Such roles may be supported by a variety of media – print, television, film, journalism – but again requires people meeting, discussing, disagreeing. Where do they do this, at what time of the day or what day of the week, and how do they get there? If the working week continues to shorten (although the average number of hours worked in Britain falls much less rapidly than the hours specified in employment contracts), and if the numbers of fit elderly people continue

to rise, then there might be more scope for rearranging the timing of events.

So far, I have concentrated on intra-urban movement patterns and trends. When we look at inter-urban patterns we see once again rising congestion, especially in the airways. Passenger traffic at London's airports doubled to nearly seventy million a year between 1977 and 1989, and could double again in the next 12 years. Already many Western European airports have introduced restrictions on use because of air traffic congestion. The growth has been in both business and holiday traffic. Telecommunications are no substitute for the latter, although tales of delayed departures dismay would-be charter flight holidaymakers as much as the consistent reports of delays on London's congested M25 orbital motorway, as business travellers nose along the roads to Heathrow.

Within Western Europe - and eventually Eastern Europe - there is particular interest in the planned expansion of high-speed rail networks, of which the French *train à grand vitesse* (TGV) is perhaps the best known example, and the channel tunnel venture the best publicized route addition. On such services, city centre to city centre journey times by rail become competitive with those of the airways. The scenario is once again one of growing demand, with existing major cities capturing most of the trip ends, and the new network simply reinforcing the pre-existing pattern of accessibility and nodality. Major provincial cities in north and west England, Scotland and Wales are pressing hard to be connected properly to the high speed network. What is the relevance of this to telecommunications? Simply that many teleworkers will still need to visit, and be visited by, their clients and partners. Meetings are necessary to judge, verify and command in a way which telephone calls and faxes cannot.

Many of the ideas expressed in this paper are not new, of course. Robert L Meier propounded a 'communications theory of urban growth' in the 1960s. He envisaged some people being blessed with the necessary income and competence to communicate globally by visits if necessary, by telephone routinely, and equally to be able to participate in a variety of neighbourhood activities. At the other end of his spectrum were those totally constrained by their immediate locality. Looking back over the intervening twentyfive years or so, it is clear that those with the greatest propensity to move around the globe are equally likely to clock up high mileages around their homes, and possibly to participate most actively in local voluntary, social and sporting activities. They do not substitute telecommunications for travel: they use both in abundance. They are likely to be the first, in private jet aircraft, to use the new systems of airplane-satellite-ground telephone and lap-top computer links. Inevitably issues of how the information-rich and information-poor relate to each other will assume considerable political importance, just as financial income and wealth issues do at present.

The necessary, the possible, the likely

Bringing some of these rather frayed threads together, what are the implications of advances in telecommunications for the city? There is no doubt that, in response to congestion, some individuals and firms will wish to decentralize from expensive and congested city centres. In some cases they will retain headquarters functions at the centre, and rely to a greater extent on a dispersed workforce, or on flexible team-building, to provide sub-contracted services for them. But the firms that remain in place, and the workforce that daily endures what Sir Patrick Abercrombie called 'pendulum travel' to get from home to work and back again, will continue to press for improved travel conditions by public transport, and for a reduction in the aggravating congestion on the roads that hinders both through traffic and necessary local deliveries.

There seems to be no alternative other than for each city to examine its transport problems and adopt locally appropriate solutions. To be sure, some curative measures, such as over vehicles emissions, will be imposed by national, or in the case of the European Community, supra-national regulations. These apart, cities will be free to adopt a battery of measures ranging from traffic calming (adapted from the *wonerfen* concept in the Netherlands), to red routes, stricter parking regulation enforcement, and maybe even road pricing. The automobile industry might help eventually by producing proper town cars that are energy-efficient, small and manoeuvrable.

Presently rather discredited, after a decade of liberating the market mechanism, is the notion of thorough-going land-use/transportation planning with a more rational control of the siting of proposed developments. Thought will be given afresh to encouraging greater use of public transport, maybe even of bicycles. Cities in the Netherlands show how, for that climate, landscape and culture, the bicycle can be a much more appropriate vehicle for intra-city movement than the car.

More radical still are approaches which see time and space as intertwined. Such an analysis was pioneered by Prof T. Hägerstrand in Sweden, and his work has influenced a whole generation of 'time geographers'. At least for relatively self-contained smaller communities, it is possible to assess the consequences for personal mobility and trip generation patterns of rescheduling such everyday activities as school hours, office hours and local bus timetables. What would happen if cities the size of London reintroduced cheaper early morning fares on public transport, similar to the workingmen's fares of a century ago? What would happen if deliveries were required to avoid the morning and evening peak periods? What would happen if more firms adopted a

mixture of real flexible working hours alongside a modest allowance for homeworking?

In this respect, flexibility in working practices through a person's working life might be as significant as flexibility in working hours during the day. Britain remains a laggard when compared with much of North America. A recently-formed not for profit group, New Ways to Work, is urging that more companies encourage flexible working through such methods as term-time working, reduced working hours and negotiated hours, career breaks and sabbaticals, and job sharing. At present experiments in such methods are few in number, but if employees really do find themselves in a sellers' market as demographic shifts bite, then the scope for adoption might increase significantly. And yet, and yet ... Those who, like Thorstein Veblen saw the leisure society a-coming are still waiting for its proper articulation sixty years on. Will we have to wait so long for the telecommunications society?

So we return to my opening statement about evaluation. Questions of ecology and energy are now added to the technological, financial and legal appraisal of investment decisions. Vehicle restraint and a shift to efficient and safe public transport are imperative in many cities. Politicians know what is necessary. Yet they are hampered by the seeming impossibility of finding a propitious combination of the various cycles that affect investment. The average ministerial cycle may be only fifteen months in Britain, and many transport ministers are driven by the NIMTOO credo (not in my term of office). The electoral cycle is four or five years long, the economic cycle maybe of similar frequency, but not necessarily overlapping. Seven, ten or even more years may be required before political, financial and legal obstacles to transport infrastructure works can be overcome. Construction or improvement is almost always the easiest and quickest part of the sequence, occupying the final two or three years.

If this continues to be the case in the 21st century, then the prognosis is for an approach to the urban transport problem which differs little from that with which we are all familiar. Eventually creeping paralysis is agreed to have reached unacceptable levels. Crises and calamities generate action. Even national treasuries can no longer withhold their investment funds, whether largely on their own, or in partnership with the private sector.

What should be possible in the coming century, however, is that we should have more knowledge about the likely consequences of our actions. What will the do nothing scenario imply? What will alternative mixtures of palliatives do? What is the balance between taxpayer and transport user, between the public and the private sectors? As networks are improved, benefits to users are geographically dispersed; disbenefits to nearby residents and businesses are highly localized during construction and operation. Is proper compensation given to those adversely affected? What considerations should I, as an individual citizen, have in mind when

I decide which mode of transport to use for different kinds of trips? Will citizens add personal health considerations to those of ecology and energy? Further, how will I be better able to know in advance which routes should be followed, to minimize delay? (On-board data screens, such as the 'trafficmaster' package developed by General Logistics, provide such information already.)

There is widespread consensus about what is necessary. There is even broad agreement about the range of measures that are possible to secure improved circulation of road traffic and of travellers by public transport in cities. The European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions reports that an estimated 35 to 40 per cent of commuting trips to central London could ultimately be substituted by telecommuting. But when we consider what is likely we are faced by the familiar mixture of rather fuzzy images, in which we select a picture that best incorporates our personal political preferences based on the basic issues of who pays and who benefits. I have only skirted around the question of who benefits from teleworking and telecommuting: for example, this narrative has focused on the adopters of the technology, the existing car users and longer-distance commuters, not on the inner city resident with low levels of literacy, no familiarity with screen-based skills, and with little expectation of spending a nomadic life in the thrall of the miniaturized gadgetry of personal communications networks.

In Britain we largely avoid such debates, leaving the telecommunications companies to develop new services and products as they see fit and with a minimum of direction by the government departments of Trade and Industry and of Transport, or of the tax-making and tax-removing Treasury. I shall be interested to know if Canada, in its cities, provinces and federally, views the opportunities in a different way.

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2 Cities and the Communications Revolution

Giulio Maffini

Purpose and scope

Our cities are the engines that propel our national and international economies. They both house and reflect our technological achievements. They are places where most of us live our lives and where we reap the results, desired or undesired, of our collective actions. Communications networks are the essential threads that weave our urban fabric together. They influence how an individual city grows and how the system of cities develops.

The purpose of this paper is to explore how the continued rapid improvement in communication technology, 'the communications revolution', is likely to affect the development of our cities. The views expressed are based upon my personal observations and informal extrapolations. Although I have not conducted a detailed analysis of the data, I will attempt to present these hypotheses in a systematic and structured way, which should make them easier to assess and validate. At the end of the paper I suggest some public policy implications and conclusions.

Concepts and definitions

Before launching into the main body of the paper, it would be useful to clarify a few definitions:

When I refer to **communications** I mean all types of networks or methods for communicating between places. This includes all types of communication networks that facilitate face-to-face contact, movement of goods, and information exchange.

Cost of communication refers to the total expenditure required to get information or physical objects from one place to another.

Speed is the average rate that the physical distance between places is covered to accomplish the communication.

Quality is a subjective assessment of the value of the communication event. It can be noted by the extent that the process of communicating interferes, filters or alters the object or information being transferred.

Substitution of information for physical communication refers to the extent to which transfer of information can replace the physical movement of objects.

Acceptable physical distance: The average distance to opportunities that a business or an individual is able to cover within a fixed travel time budget.

Societal amenity values: A very general term intended to reflect collective preferences exhibited by businesses and individuals for space, neighbourhood, ambience and environment.

System overview

There is widespread acceptance of the connection between the character of urbanization and development of transportation systems. For example, it is generally acknowledged that the rapid low density suburbanization of North American cities (in comparison to European cities) has occurred because of the early adoption and extensive availability of both automobiles and high quality highways.

Although much work has been done to attempt to measure how information communication affects urbanization the consensus is not so clear. One of the important reasons why we are not so sure is that the

nature and types of information technologies have been in a state of continuous metamorphosis. We simply have not had enough time to isolate the effects of an individual information technology.

In order to assess the consequences of continued technological development for physical and information communication I will try to use a systems approach. Figure 2.1 illustrates some of the major forces which I believe affect both individual city structures and the system of cities.

Physical communication

Technological developments have affected the efficiency and effectiveness of various modes of physical communication. If we consider cost, speed and quality it is clear that travel within cities, as opposed to between cities, has been affected differently. For intra-city transportation the modes have not changed that much during the last fifty years. The basic choices are still car, bus or rail. This is despite the fact that, twenty to thirty years ago, much hope was placed on the potential for innovative new transportation technologies that would enable individuals to whisk from one location to another using vacuum tubes and special guideways. The mix of use in travel modes has not changed much either; the car continues to dominate as the most popular means of personal travel. Marginal improvements have been made to the efficiency and size of automobiles and, while it is hoped that these will result in reduced emissions, the essential structure of urban transportation decisions remains unchanged. Realistic expectations from technological development of physical transportation seem to be for further incremental changes.

Physical communication between cities is somewhat different. The increased availability of air travel has had a significant impact on virtually all members of society. This mode of travel has seen substantial increase in usage, due to decreasing cost and increased speed and quality. The development of the airways network, in terms of more commercial airports, multiple national carriers, and the cascade of secondary and tertiary carriers servicing smaller centres now enables an individual in any part of the world to reach another within a day through a very limited number of airport transfers (a maximum of about four.) It is now possible to travel between Ottawa and Los Angeles or Buenos Aires or London with one transfer in about half a day.

Although performance improvements via road have not been so dramatic, there has been a noticeable enhancement in our ability to move people and goods faster via the road network. In Canada and most of the USA the rail system as a mode of communication is now almost exclusively a means of moving goods.

The cost of travelling between cities in relative terms has risen more moderately than travel within cities. The quality of physical

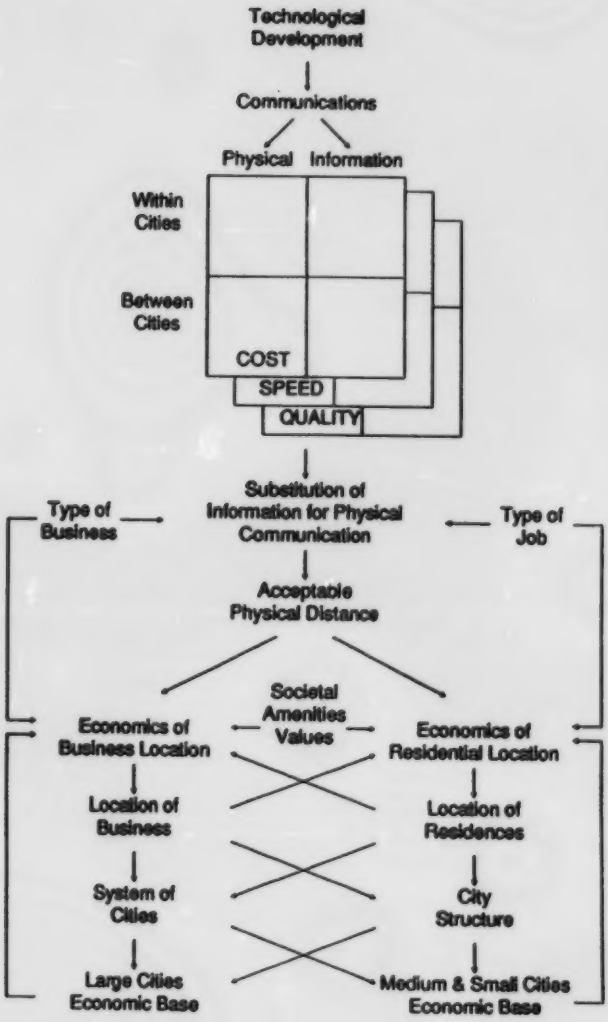

Figure 2.1 Communications impact: system overview

communication between cities has remained high, while the quality of travel within cities is perceived to have declined. The speed of physical communication within cities continues to increase as we expand the road network, but this seems to be happening at an ever-diminishing marginal rate. We seem to be caught in a flow and congestion cycle, suggesting that we are approaching a steady state. In contrast, the speed of physical communications between urban areas has increased and it is now possible to reach more places and opportunities more quickly than ever before.

Information communications

Without getting into an exhaustive catalogue of information communications technologies, there are a few that illustrate this concept. The emergence of the fax machine, for example, has enabled businesses all over the world to transmit hard copy reproductions to one another instantaneously. Quite apart from its impact on international business, the fax has also radically altered the way business is conducted within urban areas. Suddenly, the availability of fax machines has nibbled at one of the cornerstones of the advantage of being located in a central core. The need to deliver letters and other paper-based information can now be accomplished without being in close physical proximity.

The growing popularity of the cellular telephone is another example. This technology has freed many individuals in sales and marketing from their office locations. The support centre for the sales team need no longer be placed in the middle of the customer base; it can be in a more convenient and economical location for the overall enterprise, without adversely affecting the performance of the sales team.

A real prospect exists that, within five years, video telephone communication and conferencing will be a clearly established and accessible technology. The same computer terminal or personal computer which is on virtually everyone's desk today can be equipped to capture and transmit video images of the speaker. By adding the face-to-face dimension to telephone communication, new opportunities to substitute information communication for physical contact emerge.

Information technologies have made the cost of communicating information within urban areas and between urban areas decline steadily, with continued prospects for further cost reductions. The quality of information communication has been steadily improving. Innovations in technology now enable us to transmit information in more useable and accessible ways than has ever been possible. Also, the speed and quantity of information that can now be conveyed have risen sharply, reflecting our overall societal shift towards an information based society. When we consider the tendencies, a more clear and positive picture emerges, where the distinctions between intra-city and inter-city information communication are less pronounced.

Substitution

For some time now we have recognized that face-to-face contact can be substituted by information exchange. Telephone service has experienced such a remarkable popularity because it enables us to accomplish many activities that in the past required physical contact or written communication. There is, however, no business or individual that can make a total substitution of information for physical contact. A minimal level of physical interaction is desirable and will always be required. For example, it is unlikely that a restaurant will completely substitute information for physical communication and continue to conduct its business. On the other hand, a software development company building a global product may find that a much greater portion of its total communication can occur as information. The extent to which we can continue to substitute information for physical communication is one of the key factors that influences our concept of acceptable physical distance. There is no single acceptable physical distance. Different types of businesses have different perceptions of acceptable distance. If we examine the tendencies and trends discussed previously it becomes clear that, by and large, physical communication is a substantially more expensive and slower technology, but is superior in terms of the quality of the contact.

As we examine trends in the development of information communication it is clear that costs will continue to decline and speeds will increase. Innovative new ways of communicating are emerging, with levels of quality which approach those of physical communication. The communications revolution is also making available to us technologies which address space time issues in innovative ways. The conference call, for example, enables individuals located in very different places to communicate in a mutually convenient time window. If these individuals were forced to find a suitable time and place where all the individuals could be available the ability to communicate might be jeopardized. Similarly the ability to communicate using electronic mail and other messaging technologies enables us to overcome both time and space conflicts.

How then will these tendencies combine to affect the substitution of information for physical communication? First, there will be continued substitution of information for physical communication by all businesses. Secondly, the degree to which this substitution occurs will vary according to the type of business or job making this choice. The degree to which a business is able to substitute information for physical communication, and the extent to which it relies on local markets as opposed to national or global markets, will affect its perception of acceptable physical distance in its locational decisions.

The idea that land values reflect accessibility to opportunities is well accepted. The reason that our city cores have higher land values than our suburban fringes is because, in a city core, it is physically possible to reach more opportunities at less effort than from the suburban fringe. When a business considers where it should locate, there are usually both objective and subjective factors that enter into this decision. The objective factors are directly related to the expected financial performance of the organization at different places. Typically, a business will ask itself some basic questions such as:

1. Where are my potential customers?

2. How many do I need to capture?

3. Do they come to me or do I go to them?

4. Do I need to be close to my suppliers?

5. Where is there available space?

6. How much does the space cost?

7. What are the labour costs in that area?

On the revenue side a business always seeks a location that tends to place it within good access to its customers. If all of the company's business is derived from within the population base of the local area, the locational decision is strongly influenced by the distribution of its customers within that city. If, on the other hand, a business is export-oriented and only a small fraction of its total revenue is derived from the local area, then there is little strategic advantage at any particular location.

Location also affects the cost side of the financial statements. Items such as the cost of office space, the availability and cost of parking for employees, the variability of salaries, and the availability of an appropriate workforce in reasonable proximity to the location, are all factors which have a direct operational impact on the cost structure of the company.

There are, of course, many subjective and qualitative factors which will also influence the location decision. The perceived prestige, neighbourhood and availability of appropriate quality space also enter into the equation.

If a business can substitute information communication for physical communication, the perceived importance of physical accessibility will

diminish, reducing the demand and desire to locate in the city core. If the business is able to find a location which meets its communication requirements equally well in a less costly location, then relocation will eventually occur. I believe there is already evidence of this type of suburbanization occurring in the office sector. The relocation option is being exercised by those businesses which are not very dependent on physical face-to-face contact. The net effect of this trend should be a reduction in the value of the city core and reduced diversity of the core.

I believe that another tendency that has become evident is the aggregation of business activity around airports, which are the 'portals' to the system of cities. Increasingly, executive and sales and marketing staff perceive a higher premium in being located in the vicinity of the air transport system, as opposed to being in the city core. In fact some are finding that their entire business should enter the portal and locate in another urban area that is equally accessible but is not as large, congested or as high priced. When looked at in this somewhat metaphorical way, airports are vortexes which attract business and also lure into them some of the economic activity that exists in our urban systems. This tendency for business to migrate easily to more optimal locations will result in the specialization of city function. Not only will our urban cores become less diversified but our cities will also lose diversity. Birds of a feather will flock together.

Economics of residential location

If, as a result of the communications revolution, business location decisions change, how will residential choices change? Considerable work has been done to try to understand the factors that influence an individual's choice of residence. All things being equal, income earners with a choice seek residential locations which maximize their proximity to open space and nature, while maintaining their travel to employment opportunities within an acceptable time budget.

As far as I can observe, I see little change in the underlying societal amenity values used to determine home location. These values, and the tendency of businesses to decentralize, will create a positive opportunity for continued dispersal beyond the contiguous urban boundaries into new and smaller communities. The presence of a political system which essentially places our cities and suburban communities in competition with one another for attracting business development encourages and feeds this cycle.

Conclusions and policy implications

- There are few surprises in store for us on the physical communications front.

- Improvements in the speed, quality and cost of information communication are changing the economics of business locational decisions and eventually will affect, directly and indirectly, residential location preferences.

- Information communications technologies act as catalysts which, in conjunction with our existing investment in road and air networks, will result in the accelerated decentralization of our cities.

- Our city centres will lose their diversity as attractors of many business types. This will eventually lead to a decrease in real land values in the centre, and an increase in land values on the periphery.

- These information technologies will also contribute to a redistribution of growth from the larger to the medium and smaller cities.

- Physical communications infrastructure, such as airports, will become more important focal points and attractors in the locational decisions of many export-oriented business.

- In conjunction with improved information communications, we will begin to see the emergence of nomadic businesses that can seek out more remote but economically competitive locations with higher business and residence amenity values.

- With the current administrative structures, the combined effect of these tendencies may present substantial financial challenges to larger and mature cities, while creating a boom time for medium and smaller cities.

- The direct and indirect effects of information communications do have environmental implications which need to be anticipated and planned for.

- Since we are dealing with a system of checks and balances there are obviously responses which can be taken to counteract the negative effects of these tendencies. The primary issue is to

collectively redefine the role that our cities should play in our society in response to these new realities.

3 Neighbourhoods: Ghettos or Cultural Mosaics?

Paul Bedford

Introduction

The opportunity to take a close look at neighbourhoods is most timely. As we enter the 1990s, the way in which we address established and new neighbourhoods will set a pattern for the next generation.

Neighbourhoods are one of the most important characteristics of a city. Toronto has often been referred to as a city of neighbourhoods, each with a distinctive character, flavour and ambience. The city has also developed a reputation for its polyethnicity and respect for incorporating a rich diversity of lifestyles into the fabric of the city. Depending on whom one consults, the city is also fortunate among those in North America for not having slums or ghettos. Perhaps.

Although this paper will use Toronto as the reference point of my experience, I assume many of the lessons and findings will have generic applications to other large cities. I suspect that it is time to ask some pretty tough questions about neighbourhood building.

How do we define neighbourhoods?

What are the factors that influence the development of good neighbourhoods?

What have we learned from the past?

What are the characteristics of ghettos, what defines the cultural mosaic?

Are we trading off short-term solutions today for long-term problems in the future?

The business of neighbourhoods

Neighbourhood. It is a very comfortable word that most people can relate to immediately. Ask people to describe their neighbourhood and a series of images quickly develops in their minds. They may refer to street boundaries, natural geographic features, trees, parks, schools, shops, neighbours, parking problems, ethnicity or children. The list is endless, but it is very personal, and chances are it is very thorough.

Any large city has a great variety of neighbourhoods. City dwellers often recognize their city by its neighbourhoods. They give directions using neighbourhood names. People are sometimes identified by the neighbourhoods from which they come.

Ask most Torontonians where they live and you will hear words like the Annex, High Park, North Toronto, Beach, Riverdale, the Grange and Cabbagetown.

Neighbourhoods also develop unique reputations and become famous for what they offer. Amsterdam's red light district, San Francisco's Chinatown or Toronto's Kensington Market are all distinctive in their own right and are known far beyond the local urban area.

Neighbourhoods also inspire devotion and affection. In Toronto, generations of families have lived in the same neighbourhood. The pattern of life, familiarity with schools, shopping and community services have generated a high comfort level that many people do not want to lose. My own neighbour is a second generation 'Beacher' and I suspect his children may continue this pattern. Perhaps it is a sense of belonging that is responsible for this. Generally, if people are proud enough to tell people they belong to a particular neighbourhood, it follows that it must be a pretty good place to live.

Most neighbourhoods in Toronto have a retail shopping strip adjacent to or in the middle of their territory. These shopping strips are often the downtown of each neighbourhood and tend to function as linear community centres. They are the places where you will probably meet your neighbours on a Saturday. These neighbourhood strips throughout Toronto are generally characterized by an abundance of independent merchants, whose prime attribute is personal service. Retail strips represent the exact opposite of shopping malls. You can get to know and depend on local merchants for your daily needs. Again, it is not unusual to find generations of merchants operating the family business and successive generations of customers from the local neighbourhood patronizing these shops. Home delivery is not at all unusual and the reality is you can get out of your car and enjoy the street from a pedestrian's perspective.

There are many indicators one can cite in measuring the health of neighbourhoods. Aside from such conventional measuring sticks as population, income and health discrepancies, there are other signs that I believe are probably more important.

First, the reality of urban neighbourhoods is that people live close together. This produces an opportunity for face-to-face contact on a frequent basis. As neighbours get to know each other, they start to watch out for each other and provide a degree of safety. The eyes on the street concept is very much at work.

As one comes in contact with more people in the block, an informal support network develops among neighbours. You become familiar with the daily patterns of your neighbours and are likely to take notice if those patterns are abruptly changed.

My own street may be typical of this. My wife and I know all the kids on the street and watch out for them while they are playing on the street. My neighbours, in turn, look after our house while we are on vacation. Several families keep an eye on Mrs McDermott, a lively senior who has raised 10 children in her house over 50 years. This is typical of most neighbourhoods and is one of the qualities that one values.

Another vital sign of a healthy neighbourhood is gossip. Stopping on the sidewalk to catch up on the news of the street is a very human activity. I find this is especially true in spring; everyone comes out of their winter shells to rediscover each other, to see how the kids have grown, to talk about the lawn, and repairs to the house or the car. Though a good snowstorm will also bring everyone out shovelling, sweeping and helping to push your neighbour's car.

In my view, one of the most distinctive and hopeful signs is found in our neighbourhood retail strips. Every morning in Toronto, deliveries of bread, milk and newspapers are dropped off and left in front of variety stores across the city. They are left on the sidewalk in front of locked doors very early in the morning, ready for the merchant when he or she arrives to open the store. What amazes me is that, even in a big city like Toronto, these goods are not threatened. There is obviously a lot of honest people out there, or this practice would not continue.

Before leaving this section on neighbourhoods, some of the unpleasant aspects need to be recognized. The old saying that 'good fences make good neighbours' may not always be true. Problems with noise, parking, fences, property lines, animals and property maintenance represent a menu of potential conflict. There is no guarantee that your neighbour will be compatible with your lifestyle. Loud stereos, loud cars and loud neighbours may end up next door to you. There is no magic solution, other than logic, tolerance and a lot of patient dialogue. Happily, most people tend to be reasonable.

There are countless other ways to describe neighbourhoods, but the common reference point is the sharing of similar characteristics by the

residents of a particular neighbourhood. There is a common relationship among its residents that tends to bind them together in a host of different informal and formal ways.

When is a ghetto a ghetto?

Ghetto is a word that means different things to different people. In my years in the planning profession, I have seen ghettos used to describe any one of the following:

- immigrant districts
- working class neighbourhoods
- socio-economic enclaves
- ethno-cultural communities
- public housing (low-rise and high-rise)

The term ghetto is evidently used loosely, and may in fact be a misnomer for some of the above descriptions.

Generally, ghettos are not viewed as good. They tend to be associated, in physical terms, with large concentrations of housing built exclusively for a particular low-income segment of the population. They may also be synonymous with a dominant ethnic group, which tends to be insular or invisible in terms of its interaction with other segments of the population.

Examples of physical ghettos in Toronto may be Moss Park, Regent Park or St. Jamestown, all large scale redevelopment projects. Their physical building form is alien to the prevailing form and street patterns of the city; hence they stand out. From a social perspective, they tend to be more insular than outward.

Examples of ethnic ghettos in Toronto may be Chinatown, Kensington Market or Little Italy. In their physical appearance, these areas are generally more compatible with the prevailing urban form and street patterns. Their unique aspect is obviously their dominant ethnicity.

Yet, isn't the rich array of ethnic neighbourhoods across Toronto exactly what that city is known for? The number and pattern of ethnic districts is the very essence of Toronto's cultural mosaic. The intensity or dominance of each ethnic group may vary from neighbourhood to neighbourhood, but there are still very strong ethnic communities that have been the lifeblood of the city.

Waves of immigration have occurred throughout Toronto's history. These gave the city a continuous labour pool and have made a tremendous impact upon the city's very character and vitality. Fortunately for Toronto, a large and continuous influx of immigrants occurred in the 1950s and 1960s, at a time when native Torontonians began their exodus

to the suburbs. Successive waves of immigration, and a strong commitment to home ownership, saved postwar Toronto as a residential city. Unlike other North American cities, Toronto's neighbourhoods were not abandoned. Housing, schools, community facilities and retail commercial strips all were kept alive and well.

Today, one can experience a cross-section of nationalities by travelling across Toronto. Such ethnic neighbourhoods as the Polish community on Roncesvalles, the Italian community on St. Clair West, the Chinese community on Dundas and Spadina, the Portuguese community on Dundas West, the Greek community on Danforth and the Indian community on Gerrard St. East are all well known. Many other examples exist.

Some of these ethnic areas are dominated by residents who both shop and live there, whereas the India Bazaar on Gerrard St. East is predominantly a shopping district to which Toronto's and southern Ontario's Indian community is drawn on weekends. The surrounding residential neighbourhood in fact remains very much a WASP community.

Toronto's reputation as a tolerant society did not come easily, and is currently experiencing tension. Despite friction and short-term problems, however, there is general agreement that the long-term health of the metropolis depends on a successful understanding of other ethnic communities.

How does all this help us to understand whether neighbourhoods are ghettos or part of the cultural mosaic?

Toronto remains a city of neighbourhoods because it is a city of ethnic, human scale, communities. Yet ethnic neighbourhoods should not be a place where newcomers gather because they feel rejected, isolated or insulated from society. It is the ability of ethnic neighbourhoods to successfully integrate into the mainstream of society for reasons other than just their ethnicity that separates potential ghettos from the cultural mosaic.

When this isolation is further compounded by built form typologies that emphasize physical contrast and separation from the prevailing urban pattern, the conditions are ripe for spawning of ghettos. In planning for the next generation, it is vital that we do everything possible to ensure our neighbourhoods remain livable during the next century.

Forces at work in the development of neighbourhoods

With over 150 years of experience in neighbourhood building, Toronto provides many insights into how neighbourhoods have been shaped. It is important to identify the criteria that contribute to successful neighbourhoods, and to look at our recent track record in neighbourhood building. What works well? What lessons can be learned?

Historical growth benchmarks

A brief overview of Toronto's growth periods since its incorporation in 1834 reveals certain patterns in how the city has accommodated residential growth.

Growth and building booms in the 19th century were notable in the years after Toronto's incorporation (1834-1850) and in the 1880s and 1890s. These periods were also characterized by the introduction of gas lights, horse-drawn street cars, the construction of Toronto's first two City Halls, the laying out of major streets, the arrival of the railway and the growth of manufacturing, banks and institutions. New residential growth took place from the original Town of York. The pattern of development followed Toronto's street grid and tightly-knit Victorian and Gothic architectural styles of housing.

From 1900 to 1914, the city continued to expand, primarily along early streetcar routes, to include much of the geographic area of present day Toronto. The streetcar suburbs were characterized by modest brick detached and semi-detached houses, with verandas usually running the full width of the house. The density of these houses was actually quite high, with houses built within a few feet of each other. These houses were developed in relatively small numbers by different land developers and builders, and are still very much in evidence in north, east and west Toronto. Their long-term success can be attributed to adaptability to changing needs over decades and the tightly-knit pattern of development. Over the last seventy to eighty years, these dwellings have been converted back and forth, from single family dwellings to rooming houses, to self-contained apartments and back again to single or two-family homes. This flexibility in the housing stock has proved to be a lasting feature of the city's neighbourhoods that I suspect will continue to serve the city well into the 21st century. There is a strong public consensus about this built form.

In addition, the compact nature of physical development was an important factor that allowed for the viability of public transportation. The simple reality was that there were enough people to support an extensive streetcar network. This has continued to be equally relevant to the subway lines built in the 1950s and 1960s.

The 1940s to the 1960s

The first departure from this successful and incremental approach to neighbourhood building came about in the late 1940s. A major planning survey carried out in 1934 revealed several slum areas in the inner city. Major plans were drawn up to clear the areas of slum housing, consolidate the street and lot patterns into large scale blocks, and develop extensive public housing projects. Regent Park was the first such project, built

between 1949 and 1957. During the 1950s and 1960s, other public housing projects were built, such as Moss Park and Alexandra Park.

An urban renewal plan was developed in 1956 which advocated building high-rise apartments to replace extensive areas of 19th century housing across the city. This plan was fortunately never implemented. However, the essence of this philosophy is best represented by the St. Jamestown complex of 20 to 30 storey apartment buildings, at a density in excess of 3 times coverage.

Toronto's experience with high-rise, high density, neighbourhood development in the 1950s and 1960s has not had the same degree of success as the city's low density neighbourhoods. All of the projects mentioned are currently the subject of re-planning and rehabilitation studies. These projects turned their back on the street network and focused the component buildings inward. Streets were closed, blocks were eliminated, and open spaces were reconfigured. These actions had the collective effect of removing all the positive elements of urban life that give people comfort.

The 1970s

The 1970s produced a reform City Council, the death of the Spadina Expressway project and a new emphasis on neighbourhoods. This period brought about a new set of values that focused community, planning and political energy on sensitive infill housing and a return to well-understood principles of neighbourhood development. It was clearly the decade when everything neighbourhood was celebrated.

Major initiatives were launched, such as the formation of Cityhome, the city's non-profit housing arm. Many small-scale infill projects were successfully developed that respected the traditions of low density neighbourhoods. New housing at Dundas/Sherbourne and the Hydro Block were very important, for they established new rules of sensitivity. In Dundas/Sherbourne, a new infill apartment building was developed in the backyards of existing houses, thus allowing for retention of a strong house form streetscape, while still increasing housing stock. The Hydro Block brought about several innovations. Through creative treatment of grade, basement apartment units were introduced with direct entry onto rear yards. A relatively high density of two times coverage was achieved within a height that was similar in scale to surrounding houses.

The most significant experiment in neighbourhood building of the 1970s was the development of St. Lawrence, a 44-acre tract of marginal industrial land located east of St. Lawrence Market. This was the largest attempt yet to create an entirely new neighbourhood. From the start, the intent was to recreate the basic street and block patterns found in the adjacent neighbourhood. An emphasis on housing mix and type was paramount. Human scale buildings were called for, and great attention

was placed on ensuring that townhouses had normal front yards, porches and front doors. The project was broken down into manageable pieces and separate architects were given responsibility for different buildings. Finally, a strong and vocal citizens' planning committee was established that essentially functioned as advocate and watchdog, to ensure the principles were adhered to.

How did it all work out? Remarkably well. A conference was held in November 1989 to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the opening of the St. Lawrence neighbourhood, and to critically evaluate whether the end product was true to its original vision. Residents, planners, architects, politicians and developers all seemed to agree that St. Lawrence was in fact a significant success.

The physical side of the agenda – planning, designing and building St. Lawrence – received high marks. People felt comfortable living there. It felt like a real neighbourhood. All the attention to detail, and adherence to some of the successful neighbourhood building principles of the past seventy years, had paid off. Perhaps the most interesting observation of all was that planners themselves lived in St. Lawrence and were proud to call it home!

The social side of the agenda did not fare so well. Despite a community services plan, the delivery of facilities did not happen in parallel with new housing. The neighbourhood's first school shared the first few floors of a housing co-op, day care was given prominence, and the Esplanade linear open space forms the main street of the new community.

The shortfall of services is now being addressed with the construction of a new school and recreation and community centre complex. Changing senior government programs and local funding priorities were partially responsible. Nevertheless, it is useful to keep in mind how much time it took to ensure that all the facilities normally found in established neighbourhoods were made available. To be a fully functioning new neighbourhood and community, provision must be made for a wide range of community support services and facilities. This is an extremely important fact that unfortunately needs to be constantly restated, as the city embarks on the development of other new neighbourhoods.

The 1980s

The most recent decade brought with it a shift in emphasis from neighbourhoods to the downtown. Mega-projects like the Bank of Nova Scotia Tower, the BCE Towers, the Bay-Adelaide Tower and the Dome were given the go-ahead after considerable debate. The 200-acre Railway Lands plan received approval and the 75-acre city-sponsored housing development named Ataratiri was initiated. The ongoing controversy over what went wrong at Harbourfront raged on. Toronto went big time, seeking both Expo 2000 and the 1996 Olympics. It was a decade of

unprecedented growth and change that highlighted the growing gap between rich and poor, the emergence of food banks, the homeless, and a bottomless waiting list of those seeking affordable housing.

The quality of the public environment took a back seat to the private environment. High-rise condominiums went up throughout the central area of Toronto, containing a predominance of small units, on-site amenities and generally uninspiring architecture. The overriding thrust was on the private domain. Development pressure intensified, while the need for affordable housing became the number one issue. In the rush to address this situation, a new set of values seemed to emerge that emphasized the production of units, fast approval timelines and securing public benefits (be they land, housing or outright cash) in return for higher densities.

How has this type of environment influenced the neighbourhoods of the 1980s?

It may be premature to pass judgement as so little time has passed. One thing is certain. Many of the lessons learned in the 1970s with St. Lawrence seemed to be iess important. Residential buildings were much higher, densities reached new plateaux, provision for new schools, parks and day care was lacking, and the concept of social mix was severely tested. Certain portions of Harbourfront illustrate these problems. Many of the lessons of successful neighbourhood building to date were set aside, some in the name of other public objectives like affordable housing and funding for Harbourfront's public programmes. The end result did not represent the original vision. The reality of Harbourfront as an emerging neighbourhood was overshadowed.

The reality of the 1990s

What kind of neighbourhoods will the 1990s produce? What is the public value system? What are people's expectations for their neighbourhoods, and their city as a whole? Is it a good time to take stock and think through where we want to go in this decade and beyond? Will the cultural mosaic continue to flourish?

There is no end of questions. Their answers must come from our past, today's reality and tomorrow's challenges and opportunities.

I have tried to briefly outline Toronto's experience with neighbourhoods over its history, and pull out some simple but powerful lessons. They must continue to form a basis for successful neighbourhoods in the future.

Although Canadian cities are generally in pretty good shape, there is a growing list of new realities that must be faced. Using Metro Toronto as my frame of reference, these seem to be the key issues:

- rising incidence of crime

- youth violence
- drugs
- subway breakdowns and delays (loss of 11 million riders on the TTC last year)
- 17,000 households on the waiting list for social housing
- food banks now supplying 90,000 people (40% of whom are children)
- 53,000 people on welfare
- 6,000 on the waiting list for day care
- no garbage landfill capacity after 1993

I could go on, but I think the picture is clear. Metro Toronto faces enormous challenges that will require a dedicated effort from all sides to overcome. Gradually, the physical and social infrastructure is being put under increasing stress. These realities, and how we as a society deal with them, will have impacts on our existing and future neighbourhoods.

Will our neighbourhoods be radically altered in a physical way, or can they accommodate more people without disruption? What are the consequences for neighbourhoods of not dealing with these issues? Is the political will strong enough to ensure the development of livable new neighbourhoods? Can interest groups overcome their local focus to address community wide needs?

Answers to the above set of questions are not easy. The issues are complex, interconnected and force us to come face to face with the very values that society holds. Yet I believe Toronto's history holds some essential lessons for sustaining lasting communities.

It seems to me rather obvious that we should be thinking long term. Not ten or twenty years, but fifty or 100 years. Will the neighbourhoods we develop in the 1990s have become ghettos when Toronto celebrates its bicentennial in 2034?

Natural evolution of the cultural mosaic

First, it is critical to recognize that Toronto's cultural mosaic and multicultural character were not planned. This simple observation is really very important in how we face the future.

Recently, I had the opportunity to host a community planning delegation from Amsterdam. During a week of tours and meetings around Toronto, they were impressed by the multicultural character of the city and its diversity of neighbourhoods. Their most pressing question was: How did we manage to plan for the integration of different cultural

communities? The answer is that we didn't. No one developed a master plan to designate neighbourhoods and retail shopping strips by ethnicity. Toronto's cultural mosaic evolved over decades and was the result of numerous forces. The pattern of Toronto's physical form, community values and government policies all nurtured the cultural mosaic, but the fact remains it was not conceived from a master plan.

Absence of pecking order

A second overriding theme in the case of Toronto is that no single ethnic or cultural community predominates. There is enough bulk in most cultural communities so no one culture dominates the pecking order. I believe this is another simple but very important observation that should be kept in perspective.

Toronto's once predominant white anglo-saxon protestant (WASP) society no longer constitutes the majority of the population. The Portuguese, Italian, Chinese, Greek, Polish, Black and Indian communities all have sizeable populations that play important roles in the life of this city. In fact, there are approximately eighty different languages spoken in the city. This tremendous diversity of population has made our residential and commercial neighbourhoods special places, and has been the very salvation for many of our retail strips, schools and residential dwelling stock.

Given these two prevailing themes, how can we continue to foster the cultural mosaic and make our neighbourhoods work?

Cities built for comfort

Most Canadians are residents of cities, but only a small percentage are actually city people. To me, city people embrace the values of urbanity, and regard cities as good places to live. They are committed to principles that result in strengthening the community as a whole versus the individual. City people believe in and advocate mixed land uses, a diversity of housing options, dynamic retail main streets, the supremacy of transit over the automobile and compact neighbourhoods. City people are very much at home living in the city and would not live elsewhere.

In contrast, residents of cities embrace a different set of beliefs. Given a choice, they would rather be somewhere else. Their focus is on the individual to a much greater degree. The supremacy of the car predominates, the desire for segregated neighbourhoods is strong, and a passion for open space and privacy is common. Above all, there is a recognition that living in the city is a temporary experience that must be endured until one can escape to the suburbs or the country. This

distinction may be a by-product of living in a large country, coupled with our other national passion, the great outdoors. It often seems we are continually trying to decide between urbanism and 'the city in a garden' philosophy. This gap has produced serious mistakes in the physical form of our neighbourhoods and the resulting comfort level of living in them.

A preoccupation with finding a better way resulted in the wholesale demolition of neighbourhoods in the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s. The prevailing value system of the day was fixated on providing high-rise apartment towers with vast areas of open space. Streets were closed and cars kept out of the neighbourhood. In Toronto, such projects as St. Jamestown, Regent Park and Moss Park all exemplify this philosophy.

In hindsight, we now know these projects were mistakes made in the name of good intentions. The city is now making a serious attempt to reintegrate these islands of the city back into the surrounding neighbourhood fabric. Streets are proposed to be reopened, open spaces restructured and regular neighbourhood facilities provided. All this is being done to try and replicate and normalize the characteristics of surrounding neighbourhoods.

As indicated already, the physical form of Toronto's neighbourhoods built from the late 1880s through the 1930s had characteristics conducive to very successful urban life. In simple terms, they worked. They worked well for generations of people and were adaptable to the changing occupancy needs of immigrants. I also believe the physical characteristics of these neighbourhoods are very important in facilitating the cultural mosaic. Let's summarize these characteristics:

- human scale buildings that foster comfort;
- density patterns that approach 6,000 to 7,000 people per square kilometre, thereby permitting a viable urban transit system;
- narrow lot widths of 5-6 metres that maximize urban land, generate small semi-private front yards and private rear yards;
- semi-detached housing and/or row housing;
- rear service lanes or mutual driveways for vehicular access, or no provision for parking at all;
- houses with porches facing the street, that facilitate neighbourhood interaction;
- continuity in the physical built form that is familiar to everyone;
- flexibility of the housing stock: the capacity to accommodate population growth without destroying the neighbourhood fabric;
- pedestrian mobility that allows a person to carry out daily activities without a car;

- vitality produced in compact neighbourhoods that foster a sense of energy, adapting and accepting.

All these characteristics of urban neighbourhoods facilitate cities built for comfort. They are places where you can live your entire life, and subsequent generations can follow. They are also very familiar living environments for immigrants who make up our cultural mosaic. Our next generation of new neighbourhoods should offer the same degree of comfort to future members of our multicultural mosaic.

Communities of interest

Today, most Canadian cities are blanketed by a large number of geographically focused interest groups. In Toronto, these groups tend to be resident and/or business associations. They have a job to do in speaking up for their local area, but seldom do these groups consider the wider community or city-wide perspective.

Does this help to foster geographic ghettos? Although active community participation is essential to a healthy democracy, the system does produce the familiar NIMBY (Not In My Back Yard) and LULU (Locally Undesirable Land Use) syndromes.

Notwithstanding the validity of local issues, there is a pressing need to address issues that span city-wide communities of interest. Environment, safety, air pollution, waste management, transit, housing and multicultural relations are just some of the city-wide issues that need to receive greater attention.

An opportunity exists to create new coalitions of interests among geographic based groups and city-wide groups. They all are really fighting for a healthy urban community. Participant communities have a tremendous and creative problem-solving capacity, but are frustrated by a lack of consensus among the community, politicians, developers and bureaucracy about how the city and its neighbourhoods should develop.

To understand how this consensus might be achieved, I believe it is useful to look at the characteristics of community. What does it mean? How might it be used to overcome the gap that now exists among locally-based groups and city-wide communities of interest?

The word community conjures up images of a comfortable feeling or concept. Most people relate to a community. It is not easy to define, but a few points are clear. First, it is not geographic. Communities span all parts of a city, province or country. Second, it generally grows organically around a common interest or focal point, like the school, church, neighbourhood or ethnic group. Clearly, many neighbourhoods have a strong sense of community. People often interchange community and neighbourhood to mean the same thing.

Over the years the record shows that attempts to create communities have generally not been successful. There are clear exceptions like St. Lawrence and Frankel-Lambert, but most of the time communities simply evolve on their own. The revival of dormant communities has proven more successful. As each new community achieves its goal, self-respect within that community increases.

Sustaining the cultural mosaic in Toronto over the coming decades will depend on the ability of communities to influence the political agenda more successfully. Community development, and a sincere effort of all parties to achieve consensus, offers the best hope of solving problems and developing self-sufficiency.

Bold public vision

A third and final requirement in sustaining the cultural mosaic is the need for a bold public vision. In Toronto, the public is searching for political and bureaucratic leadership to guide the future of the city. Confusion between the public and private vision of the city is often at the heart of the debate. If we want cities to be sustainable, we will have to seriously come to grips with density, the car and how we live together.

This is a great opportunity to set a new bold public vision for our cities, spelling out what we will be doing to achieve a better quality of life for all citizens now and in the long term. This vision must be developed in concert with the private and community sectors.

For example, just think what kind of society we could have if cars were not a principal feature of our life. Imagine what would happen if, by the year 2000, people decide to stop shopping for what they want and instead only buy what they need. How would these changes affect the way our urban areas are planned and developed?

Nobody knows the answers, but they are good questions that at least deserve serious attention. A long-term vision is needed to develop a strategy to deal with the likely possibility that Toronto could be in for a long, slow economic and social slide during the 1990s. A strong picture has really never been painted of the future. If cities are worth their salt, they will make provision for their needs instead of trying to obtain public improvements via the private sector. Schools, transit, and community facilities are prime examples. For example, I find it amazing that many believe public facilities should no longer be built by the public sector.

Canadian cities have a rich tradition of creating a solid, dependable physical infrastructure and community support facilities. Now is not the time to back away from this tradition. We need to create an environment that is conducive to good, healthy neighbourhoods that we can be proud of 100 years from now.

Emphasis on the short-term has never been more apparent than with the current push to build social housing. In Toronto, the lack of affordable housing is well known. Vacancy rates are essentially zero. In this climate, there is a political tendency to approve social housing projects, while abandoning all that has been learned about social integration, building form and compatibility over the years.

Shifting the responsibility for building public facilities onto the private sector, and short-term expediency towards social housing development at any cost, are two indicators that signal serious problems ahead for the type of city we will have and the cultural mosaic within it.

A review of the major planning debates of the 1980s demonstrates that the private sector vision of the city clearly won them. The past ten years have produced a flood of high-rise condominiums (thousands of which are now vacant), major new office towers in the downtown substantially in excess of height and density provisions, a waterfront characterized by a wall of buildings, and a pervasive value system that has emphasized the development of exclusive enclaves divorced from the physical and social fabric of the city. Yet, in this same period, no significant expansion of the transit system occurred and not one acre of parkland has been added to the central area of the city.

The irony of the 1980s is that the decade has produced a different type of city than that envisioned by the city's planning policies. Physically, socially, economically and morally Toronto is more segregated. The values and conditions that allowed the cultural mosaic to flourish in previous decades are seriously at risk.

Conclusions

The way in which cities go about building neighbourhoods is basic to the topic of this paper: are they ghettos or part of the cultural mosaic? There is probably no correct answer, as these words have different meanings when viewed in different contexts.

In Toronto, both the city's largest public housing project (Moss Park) and its wealthiest neighbourhoods (Rosedale and Forest Hill) have been referred to as ghettos. If one sticks to income and social class indicators, the term ghetto could describe these neighbourhoods. However, if we look at the broader perspective, and the factors in society that foster the cultural mosaic in our neighbourhoods, then it is essential to pay close attention to other indicators.

The rich cultural mosaic that characterizes Toronto today was not planned. It happened gradually and naturally over decades. This natural evolution was facilitated by the physical pattern of Toronto's compact neighbourhoods and retail shopping strips. As generations of WASP Torontonians moved to the suburbs in the early 1950s, successive waves

of immigration occupied the housing stock of our inner city neighbourhoods. New ethnic communities were the life blood of support for neighbourhood retail shops and schools. Continued evolution of this pattern has produced the mix of shops and neighbourhoods we have today across the city.

The physical built form that exists in our neighbourhoods is a product of an earlier public vision regarding the way in which the city should develop. As we look ahead to the next century, it is essential to paint a strong public vision for Toronto. This should be bold, challenging and make it very clear what kind of city we want to be.

Emphasis is needed on the creation of new neighbourhoods that continue to allow for natural evolution and change in a comfortable built form. Greater densities within human scale values, an emphasis on transit, pedestrian orientation, and the development of public facilities by the public sector, are just some of the elements of a public vision that may transform more city residents to city people.

In my view, planning is at its best when the results appear natural. Shaping continuous change is an ongoing challenge for planners and politicians. Yet, to be successful, both parties must be accountable in a continuing dialogue with the user communities that make up the city. The degree to which politicians, planners and the community develop consensus about the public vision will determine the long-term direction of our neighbourhoods.

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4 Patchwork Cities: Variable Experiences of Ethnic Relations in Britain

Brian Robson

Introduction

'And the city shall make us free' (Mumford, 1961). A specious claim for a place that is usually regarded with fear, anxiety, weariness, exasperation, panic and dismay? An apparently unlikely harbinger of an implicit hope for the future? Yet of course many of us – urbanists by profession and urban dwellers by choice – might validly put the sentiment both into the past and present tenses for ourselves. The city has indeed made us free: free to live a pleasant full life, providing us with a livelihood, good housing, and plenty of leisure and service facilities. Above all, cities have given choices to us favoured 'comfortable' people: the freedom of anonymity or the freedom to socialize amongst wide arrays of social networks; the freedom to choose from a bewildering variety of consumer goods and leisure activities. Not for us the overcrowded, rack-rented flat or the universally despised council estate, where poverty and violence walk hand-in-hand. Certainly crime may touch us, but good insurance cover, and even private security guards, are ours to command. Not for us the red-lined exorbitant insurance premiums or the arrogant stance of an unaccountable police force.

It is easy to sing the praises of the city from a secure vantage point. It is equally easy to acknowledge the limitations of the city for the poor and the powerless. Indeed, many of those participating in this colloquium have added to the weight of knowledge about those problems of the city, and perhaps have helped to devise the welter of so-called solutions. Similarly,

some of us have engaged in crystal-ball gazing, whether in the form of an instant fix for the media after an urban disturbance, an elaborate dream of utopia, or a fevered prophecy of doom spelt out against a more scholarly background.

It has to be said that gloom looms larger than utopia in much of the literature, and this is particularly marked when looking at the populations of immigrants and migrants in the cities. Some, like the late doyenne of urban sociology, Ruth Glass, try to have it all ways, by lambasting the utopians as being 'anti-urban', and proclaiming the virtue of the city only in the context of an ideal based on their own version of a politically acceptable society. Her suitably fashionable conclusion is that, because the cities are in a highly imperfect political and economic structure, their futures must look bleak (Glass, 1989). Is that necessarily so? Will the 21st century see that final death of the city so often prophesied but never yet fulfilled? What will become of those 'uneasy alliances of disparate villages' that constitute the neighbourhoods of cities?

Residential segregation

Space and spatial pattern have been at the core of cities throughout their history. They grew first as mercantile centres, on the basis of good spatial communications to serve their hinterlands or wider markets, and then as industrial centres, as places with good internal access to a local labour force and good external access to markets for manufactured products. Only in the 'post-industrial' era have space and distance become more ambiguous, as the city has blown apart its spatial bounds, as the divide between rural and urban has disappeared, and as cities – and especially large cities – no longer appear to have the rationale that the restraints of distance once gave them. The apocalyptic view is that large industrial cities have had their day and that we should merely ensure that their death is as painless as possible.

Since the control of space and the use of physical distance were important elements in the creation of segregation and differentiated neighbourhoods within cities, a parallel argument should be that the erosion of distance constraints ought to have led to the erosion or disappearance of residential segregation. That clearly has not happened.

Theorizing about segregation has suggested a range of complementary explanations. The Chicago urban ecologists saw segregated areas as forms of transit camps through which successive waves of migrants to the city accommodated to new and unfamiliar settings. They progressively moved out of the ports of entry in central slums and into better residential areas, through a process of invasion and succession, as they worked their way up the ladder of affluence. In keeping with the Social Darwinism on which those ideas were based, there was a degree of optimism and even

complacency about this apparently orderly and 'natural' competition. Inhabitants of the city would not be involved in cut-throat rivalry, but would learn to live together and co-operate: 'in human as contrasted with animal societies competition and freedom of the individual is limited on every level by custom and consensus' (Park, 1952, p. 156), a view which observation and research suggest is far too panglossian. Functional sociologists saw segregation as a means of preserving a family's status, by using distance as a barrier against the threat of contamination from 'lower orders', thereby using residential neighbourhoods as one-way mirrors to resist the downward mobility of their own offspring (Beshers, 1962). Marxists saw it as an expression of the divide between the bourgeoisie and proletariat, with a strong labour market element in the creation of a compact and accessible reserve army on which industry could call. The transit camps of slums were seen as places from which cheap labour could be drawn, or to which unwanted labour could be consigned until an upturn in the economy.

Elements of each explanation are embodied in the evolving maps of residential areas in all cities. Over the postwar years in British cities, what seems clear is that segregation has altered its form in different ways at different spatial scales. At the larger scale of suburban areas there has been much greater mixing of different occupational groups. This reflects both the greater mobility which rising affluence and car ownership have brought, and also the replacement of older occupationally-based status groups by 'consumption' groups, based much more on income, patterns of expenditure and life-style than on occupation *per se*. On the other hand, at the smaller scale of whole cities, the segregation between the 'deprived' and the 'comfortable' (roughly marked by the division between the inner city and the rest) has grown more marked. To no small extent, within Britain that distinction between inner and peripheral areas has also been a split between housing tenures, since the inner cities have become predominantly areas of state housing. The growth of owner occupation and the progressive reduction of state support for council housing has now left the inner areas – in which are concentrated the great mass of high-rise and medium-rise flats built by industrialized methods in the 1960s and 1970s – languishing as the unwanted, unsellable homes of a large proportion of the poor. Even some of the areas of traditional council housing have also become residual housing for the deprived. It is the great fiefdoms of council tenancy in the hearts of the large cities that have provided the malleable, if troublesome, bedrock of the Labour local authorities in cities such as Liverpool, Glasgow, Sheffield and Manchester.

Even though the inadequacies of census data make it difficult to establish the detailed picture of ethnic minority residence within these broader patterns of segregation, the general pattern is clear. Over time, the Caribbean population has become more highly concentrated within such council housing. Although the Asian population has proved more

resistant to council tenancy, it too is found predominantly, but by no means exclusively, in inner areas, either in the 19th-century terraces left standing when the bulldozers of slum clearance stopped in the 1970s or, to a lesser degree, in council housing.

What has changed in the last decade is that the government's Urban Programme has begun to introduce new private housing into some of these swathes of inner-city dereliction. The emphasis on public-private partnership, and the emergence of developer-led growth coalitions in many of the big cities, have produced enclaves of high-priced or medium-priced housing in those accessible central areas which have offered such desirable residential potential as waterfront locations. This has reversed, for the first time, the seemingly inexorable cleavage between low-status council-tenanted inner areas and comfortable owner-occupied peripheries. The most dramatic case is the London Docklands, into parts of which – Wapping and Limehouse in particular – new housing, remodelled warehouses or privatized and refurbished council blocks offer £200,000+ housing which sits cheek-by-jowl with the forgotten council flats and houses of the original, largely deprived, inhabitants. But, while London is the most striking example, most big cities show parallels, albeit at lesser scale: Manchester has its Salford Quays, Liverpool its Albert Docks, Bristol its Tobacco Wharf, Hull its Docklands. All are carefully screened and protected by enclosures designed to shut them off from, or to turn their backs on, the proximate threat of the deprived. While much argument has focused on the fact that urban renewal of this kind has merely displaced the poor and brought them neither housing nor employment benefit, what has been achieved is to bring closer to the surface the social and economic tensions inherent in such divisions, tensions which previously could be more readily hidden and suppressed by the fact of segregation.

Yet the belief in an inner/outer divide and in the association of ethnic minorities with dilapidated and deprived inner areas is much too simple. Such views derive too much from the experience of America – from which we still draw too many unthought-through parallels. British cities are smaller, have less local autonomy and yet more historical individuality, have less well-developed community-based activities in the face of a welfare state and have a still minute proportion of 'minority groups'. The census estimate for 1981 (based on those born in the New Commonwealth and Pakistan (NCWP) or in households with NCWP-born heads) suggests that little more than 4 per cent of the UK population was then of NCWP origin. Since even at that date the split in this group between those born outside and inside the UK was 40:60, it is clear that the numbers and percentage will have increased significantly over the intervening decade with the growth of the second- and third-generations. Even though that population is concentrated in cities (with over 40 per cent of the UK total living in Greater London), few cities outside London had more than 10

per cent NCWP population: only Birmingham, Blackburn, Bradford, Leicester, Sandwell, Slough and Wolverhampton. Unlike America, British cities have never seen the development of virtually uniform ghettos of ethnic populations; reflecting not only the small size of its minority groups, but also housing policies within Britain. Moreover, the major ethnic minorities are as internally divided in Britain as they are in America. Given the idiosyncrasies of individuals and of ethnic groups, it is clear that the ethnic patchwork is made up of very small pieces. The experience of different cities has varied considerably, reflecting the industrial legacy of different places and the consequent occupational niches into which migrants in the 1950s and 1960s moved.

The variety of experiences

Take, for example, the old industrial cities of Britain. The temptation is to think of them as suffering uniformly from the impacts of deindustrialization. Images spring to mind of the decline of British manufacturing, of British shipbuilding, even of Britain itself. Waste lands of worn-out mills and derelict factories mingle with forlorn and empty docks in the mind's eye. Indeed it has become difficult to disentangle the media image of some urban areas from both the reality and the history in which that reality is rooted. Manchester, which once proudly boasted that what it did today the rest of Britain did tomorrow, now has a national, if not an international, image based on the soap-opera *Coronation Street*. The constant stream of Liverpool-based dramas and sitcoms reinforce the national image of work-shy, argumentative, self-pitying cities, whose people wallow in the economic and social problems which beset them. Glasgow, despite its undoubted economic success and its current status as European City of Culture, is still invariably depicted as a grim, gang-ridden, incomprehensible, drunken place.

One sure way of gaining a headline is to publish a supposedly-academic study which claims to 'rank' cities in terms of their desirability as places in which to live and work. It is clear that British cities emerge rather badly within the 'league' of European cities (Cheshire and Hay, 1989), but within Britain itself academics have vied with each other to produce allegedly objective rankings that reinforce the image of the uniform awfulness of big cities and the delights of small, freestanding towns and rural areas (for example, Champion and Green 1988). Yet the latest survey of 1,000 young people in an upmarket magazine (*Company*, November 1990) indicated that, in the eyes of the young, Glasgow is seen as clean, safe and friendly, with superb leisure facilities and excellent night-life. Many good points were suggested for other cities.

Fact and fiction about our cities mingle uneasily, but they reflect and distort the very diverse factors which have made these cities into such an

exciting patchwork and which have influenced their pasts and will affect their futures. The wealth of Britain's cities grew out of the First Industrial Revolution by a series of rather specific industrial waves which affected different cities at different times (Robson, 1973), and which created markedly different industrial and occupational legacies that have been consistently reflected in their subsequent political, economic and social fortunes. Foster (1968), for example, has graphically traced the very different local political tempers of the three towns of Oldham, Northampton and South Shields to show the influence of their varying 19th-century industrial bases, and hence their different legacies of industrial relations. The mix of skills, genders and industrial relations demanded by different industries at different periods – during an age when industrial location was directed specifically by the different factor endowments of different locations – produced different inheritances of labour relations which have echoed through to the present (e.g. the cotton towns in the early 19th century of the North West with their large factories and female labour; the absentee ownership of mines and shipyards which expanded rapidly in the later years of the century in the towns of the North East; the small-scale entrepreneurial growth of factories in the West Midlands). It is this legacy which has created the current interest in tracing the influences of the variability of different localities (Cooke, 1989). Each city, indeed each town within the chief conurbations, has its own individual historical palimpsest, onto which have now been written the different experiences of waves of migrant groups.

Bradford

For example, the author J.B. Priestley, ruminating on his native Bradford in 1933, mourned the loss of the German-Jewish community which had provided 'a curious leaven of intelligent aliens' and had 'brought more to the city than bank drafts and lists of customers' (Priestley, 1934, p. 161). In regretting their departure, or their decision to change their names and submerge into the local scene, he paused to attack the contemporary popular press which was trying to keep out new waves of German Jews. He could hardly have foreseen the Bradford of 1981 which had an estimated 10% of its population of Asian origin (with 6.5% from Pakistan, 2.8% from India, 0.3% from East Africa, 0.4% from Bangladesh and a further 0.8% from the Caribbean and 0.5% of other origins). As Dervla Murphy has so graphically described in her *Tales from Two Cities*, the whole way of life of part of Bradford has been changed by that immigration. Settled mainly by Mirpuri, whose homeland she knew well, what struck her most was

> *...how little exile has changed these people - at least externally. The way the women walk and dress and gesture and speak to their*

children and carry their babies makes the 1960s notion of assimilation seem laughable. Many of the older men, and a few of the younger generation, still wear loose shirts and baggy trousers and skull-caps or warm Gilgiti hats; and some have carefully hennaed hair and beards. (Murphy, 1987, pp. 8-9).

How did Bradford, 'a city in a backwater' (Priestley, 1934, p. 158) acquire so unlikely a population? It is claimed that the first Pakistani/Indian immigrants were former seamen directed to munitions factories in the Leeds-Bradford area during the 1939-45 war. They bought run-down property and took in lodgers, often kinsmen who joined them. By 1944 they probably numbered no more than 40. Nevertheless this nucleus grew until in 1961 there were 3376 Asian men (mainly Pakistanis) in Bradford – and 81 women. Most of these immigrants came because they were 'sponsored' by somebody already established in Bradford, where there appeared to be plentiful work in the textile mills. The bitter aftermath of the 1947 Partition of India meant that many Pakistanis were only too eager to find somewhere apparently less troubled and offering more opportunity than their homeland. However the men did not bring their wives and families until the implementation of the 1962 Immigration Act, which was the first in a long sequence of legal restrictions placed on immigration. Anticipating its effects, thousands of women and children came to Bradford, as to other cities where single Asian men had settled. Ironically, it has been suggested that without that Act there might never have been large permanent Asian settlement. There may be some doubt about how far the 'myth of return' would have operated if there had not been an urgent need to transport families to Britain, although many might have returned to Pakistan and then moved to other prospective employment in areas such as the Middle East. However, once locked into the varying economic fortunes of Britain by the stringencies of successive immigration laws (1962, 1965, 1968, 1971, 1981), immigrants from the New Commonwealth and Pakistan found their choices limited. What was left was choice within Britain and visits back to their native lands with the likely attendant harassment at exit and entry. Bradford, which had accepted its earlier immigrants with some equanimity as it had small numbers of European nationals through the 19th century, became less well disposed. As one case-history of Pakistani immigrants reported:

Up to 1962 there was no hatred against the immigrants in Bradford, but after that it started slowly. We decided... before it was too late to go to a place where we could buy houses close to each other... (Anwar, 1979, p. 197).

But for those who left, there were plenty more to fill their places so that by the mid-1980s it could be said of Bradford that it

... faced the largest increase in in-population of any Metropolitan District in the country... in ten years the District has moved from full employment, a superficially healthy economy and relative prosperity for nearly everyone to massive factory closures... nearly 50,000 people are drawing Supplementary Benefit and more than a third of all families rely on some kind of State Benefit... only 7% of black school leavers are finding work, compared with 37% of white school leavers (Bradford City, 1984. Note that 'black' is here used in its political sense of all coloured people; in Britain, there has been a long-running terminological warfare about the use of the word 'black', which has variously been applied to all those who are not white, to Africans and Afro-Caribbeans only, or to the latter plus 'Asians' from the Indian subcontinent and East Africa).

In the 1980s, tensions in Bradford arising out of its post-war ethnic mix became more marked. The obstinacy and self-righteousness of a schoolmaster, who resisted the introduction of anti-racist practices and of Islamic dietary rules in his school, clashed with the equal obstinacy and self-righteousness of parental anti-racist groups to produce the Honeyford affair in 1985 (Halstead, 1988). This well-publicized matching of two immovable and unlovable forces only hardened feelings. The public burning of Salman Rushdie's book in Bradford by Dr Akhtar in 1989 served not only to re-open old divisions, but also to emphasize the encapsulated nature of so much of the Muslim community in Britain. Dr Akhtar's seemingly ingenuous assurance that it was his own personal copy which he had bought and therefore he could do with it as he wished – 'in a free country' – still sent shudders through those who had memories of other book burnings.

Bradford reflects the experience of a city which, by an accident of history and of its own historical legacy of textile work, has become the home of large numbers of immigrants and their descendants, producing a very different patchwork effect from the one that any Bradfordian over the age of fifty might have expected. The majority of the immigrants are Pakistani and Muslim, and Bradford's recent history underlines the strain of the culture clash as well as the distress caused by economic problems.

Manchester

Not many miles from Bradford lies the very different and major city of Manchester, a place well used to receiving incomers in large numbers and with a much broader economic base that has commerce as much as manufacture at its heart. From the early nineteenth century the city acted like 'a diligent spider', drawing in vast numbers of people: well-to-do Jews and European merchants who saw prospects in the growing 'cottonopolis', poor Irish labourers who continued an influx into the area through most of the century, and later waves of poor Jewish people fleeing the pogroms

of Eastern Europe. To these were added Armenians, Turks, Greeks, Austrians, Germans, Italians and Portuguese to create a rich ethnic mix. Most of these nationalities were attracted by the economic prospects of the city; some came because of political repression in their homelands; others, like smaller groups of Asian and African seamen, jumped ship and prepared to make their way in an environment which may not have been friendly but was better than life on board ship. Students, of course, came from all over the world. Rachel Ryan, writing from the perspective of a quintessentially well-favoured middle-class resident in 1937, claimed that in Manchester

> *... no man was penalised for his principles or his political beliefs. He could believe and say what he thought; the majority of Manchester citizens would take no particular notice of him and business was open without restriction to all who could make their own way in it* (Ryan, 1937, p. 90).

On the other hand even she, a liberal-minded author, could refer to the Turks as a group

> *... with which we had no contact at all... we always enjoyed a walk to Rusholme because we might be rewarded by the sight of a Turk... gravely pacing in carpet slippers, with red fez and black beard. There was a mixture of strangeness and familiarity in the sight which made it particularly pleasing. It was nice to have the Turks looking so different and being so different, and it was nice too to feel sure that they would always be there* (Ryan, 1937, p. 103).

In 1990, that same area of Rusholme is an amazing mixture of Asian enterprise, with no sign of any Turks. Every sort of restaurant and sweet-house is available: their origins range from different parts of Pakistan, India, Bangladesh and the various countries of East Africa. Sari-houses, jewellers, mini-markets, banks, insurers, travel agents and lawyers all proclaim their wares in a variety of tongues. This is a product of very different Asian migrant streams from those that moved to Bradford. They are derived more from urban areas, and are more skilled, more affluent and professional. All reflect something of the commercial legacy and potential of the city to which they have moved.

A second important difference from Bradford is how long-established Manchester's West Indian population is. The city became a magnet for black servicemen stationed in the North of England during World War II and the Fifth Congress of the Pan-African movement was held there in 1945. The work of Ras Tefari Makonnen (born George Thomas Nathaniel Griffith in British Guiana in 1900) in setting up restaurants, dance-halls and clubs in Manchester during 1939-45 was a major initiative. Not only did he provide social centres for black servicemen of all nations, but he also made enough money to help other black causes; such as providing the defence for black sailors accused of mutiny, defending a black RAF

man from a murder charge, as well as setting up a publishing house, a bookshop, a monthly journal and organizing the Congress. That Congress – meeting in the Town Hall of Chorlton-on-Medlock, in the south of Manchester – brought together 'the future political leadership of British territories in Africa round 1960.' The fact of its having been hosted in Manchester says much for the high profile established by Manchester-based West Indian blacks.

A third difference in Manchester is the variety of its 'black' population. According to the 1981 census, Manchester had a large population of Caribbean origin, numbering 12,707, which represented 37% of the total NCWP population of 33,944, whilst the Asian groups included 5,958 from India, 7,509 from Pakistan, 1,149 from East Africa and 960 from Bangladesh. The Caribbean population, together with a small black African presence, some of which dates back to before 1914, feels itself aggrieved and often overshadowed by the enterprise culture of the Asians and their insistence on the observance of religious customs, as well as by their demands for mother-tongue teaching.

Most Caribbeans who arrived in Britain just after the war, or who had served in the forces during the war, genuinely believed, despite bitter historical memories, that Britain was the 'Mother Country.' Theirs was a swift and complete disillusionment. Talking to older Caribbean men and women who came in those first migrations is a disturbing experience. Many worked for years in 'cellar work' – jobs that the British-born worker would not deign to touch in a period of full employment. Others proudly found somewhat better employment as nurses or bus drivers. All of them discovered that, when chill economic winds blew, they were the first fired – a sad fact often aided and abetted by the trade union movement. Keeping alive their own 'myth of return' proved harder for the Caribbeans, whose family networks were not always so strong and supportive as those from South Asia. The heritage of slavery and colonialism has much to answer for, not least the attempted destruction of African ethnic inheritance. Nevertheless the Caribbean families had high hopes for their children and grandchildren; they expected the education system to yield a rich and rewarding fruit. Instead it failed: children from a Caribbean background appeared to do less well at school than any other group, while the Asians led the field. In vain the Bullock report in 1975 drew attention to

> ... *the fact that for a child from a West Indian background his mistakes or deviations from standard English often bear a superficial resemblance to those of the slow-learning native speaker, but the mistakes are essentially those of the second language learner* (Bullock Committee, 1975).

By 1985 a trenchant attack on Manchester Education Authority was launched by the Black Caucus, a sub-committee set up by the West Indian Organisations' Co-ordinating Committee (WIOCC). But the net result of

a cogently-argued case for greater involvement and consultation of parents in their children's education seems to have been the greater uptake of private schooling amongst West Indians. One parent said, 'I may be a paid up member of the Labour Party but no way am I letting my daughters loose in their schools.' Whenever parents can afford it, even if it means one parent taking two jobs, their view is that it is only in the private sector that the sort of discipline and education they want is on offer. Others compete (often fruitlessly) with sharp white middle-class parents, ever alive to what is both best and cheapest for their children, to get their children into a 'good' comprehensive schools which is Anglican (voluntary) controlled and which happens to be situated close to Moss Side, one of the chief areas of Caribbean settlement in the city.

Yet, despite the variety of their origins and the tensions between them, the many minority groups of Manchester do come together to work for the common good. Recently, the City Council organized a Race Sub-Committee comprised of representatives elected from each community in Manchester. Alliances form and reform, since even anti-racist, equal-opportunity-loving city councils like Manchester are not beyond using divide and rule as a way of control. One interesting aspect of ethnic diversity has been the virtual re-creation of an Irish community, a group which, while numerically strong, has hitherto shown little political self-awareness. The Mancunian Irish have begun to flex their muscles, given the prospect of public resources being channelled to ethnic groups through the Urban Programme. The equally long-established Jewish community, however, has preferred to keep a low profile, partly because many of them have moved out of the city and partly because they are never quite sure where anti-semitism may appear, whether in the mouth of a Muslim leader or in the desecration of a local graveyard.

No City Council of Manchester can ignore the fact that Manchester's black and Asian roots go back a long way. The fact that Manchester has always been a high profile city of mixed immigration, including economically and politically influential individuals and groups, has made it a city of some tolerance, especially when the immigrant has shown a willingness and capacity to make a living. Indeed, in some parts of the city, tolerance extends to positive alliance when a common enemy like the police can be targeted. The uprisings of 1981 in Moss Side involved both black and white young people (and a few older ones). Their chief cause may well have been that

> *... young people are left, rightly or wrongly, with the impression that they have nothing to gain from established society, particularly where they have hitherto not yet gained any stake in it... [and that] there is no doubt in our minds but that throughout Greater Manchester young people dislike the police and there is equally no doubt that among young people in Moss Side this resentment is felt deeply* (Hytner, 1981, 45.7 and 25.3).

It is an interesting but little noted fact that those charged following these incidents were more white than black (68 versus 53).

The variety and intricacy of Manchester's ethnic mix, and the complexity of dealing with it, were made even more apparent after the murder, in September 1986 in a school playground, of a Bangladeshi schoolboy by a white contemporary. By the time the race relations experts, the politicians and the so-called community leaders had stirred the sad and sorry pottage of events surrounding this tragedy, it seemed difficult for ordinary Mancunians, whatever their colour, to remember that, in delivering their children into the care of teachers, it was their right to expect them to act *in loco parentis*, and that any good school should care for and guide all its pupils.

The many shortcomings of the state system of education in Manchester may seem unimportant to those who are thriving in Britain's enterprise culture, including the many immigrant Mancunians who are also the chief supporters of the famous former 'direct grant' schools which now are private schools and which abound in the area. Commercially foremost, and among the most recent of the groups is the growing Chinese community which, at perhaps 15,000, is now reckoned to be the largest after that in London. Some of the more recently arrived Manchester Chinese have come no further than from Liverpool, since they were quick to recognize which of the two cities had potential to develop economically. Having revitalized a rundown area of the city and filled it with restaurants and shops as well as a Chinese garden and a ceremonial arch (a present from the Beijing government), Chinese businessmen take advantage of the direct flights from Manchester airport to conduct their many dealings with Hong Kong, Beijing and elsewhere in the world. At the time of the Tiananmen Square massacre, Chinese students from Manchester University pleaded with the City Council to break its twinning link with the Chinese city of Wuhan, but the leading Chinese businessmen kept quiet.

Indeed, the attitude of most immigrant (and descendants of immigrant) business leaders is well in keeping with a city whose wealth was built first on slavery in the cotton fields and then on hard labour in the mills. Wealthy Asian merchants from both the Indian sub-continent and East Africa live in quiet luxury, whilst their work-force all too often lives and works in mean conditions. There are plenty of poor, harassed people amongst Manchester's ethnic minorities, but there is also a wide variety of the well-to-do and the well-educated, some of whom are not yet entirely sure where their loyalties lie.

Liverpool

Confused loyalties are not an issue which arises in Liverpool. This sad old seaport, forever lodged in the world's mind as the birthplace of the Beatles, is not a place that immigrants – of any background – make for nowadays. Facing the wrong way for a country that must try to make its future Euro-centred, fettered by the violence and obscurantism of all its political parties, it has found the demands of late 20th century mores almost impossible to deal with. The exit of many Liverpool Chinese has already been noted; few entrepreneurs, least of all immigrants, see many prospects there – the handsome refurbishment of the Albert Docks notwithstanding. However what Liverpool does have is a long established non-white population, British not just by birth and upbringing, but by those intangible roots which politicians and media pundits love to lyricize about. This population is the natural outcome of a port whose shipowners scoured the world for the cheapest, most hard-working and obedient seamen. Being British, however, has not prevented Liverpudlian blacks from being marginalized, as the Liverpool Black Organisation pointed out in its report to the House of Commons in 1980:

> *Liverpool provides the best example of an old established black community, dating back at least as far as the slave trade... despite the long established nature of the Liverpool Black Community, we feel in many ways further behind than black people in other parts of Britain... the Liverpool born black population is by far the largest of the racial minorities on Merseyside. Regardless of this we feel at best ignored by the authorities and at worst suffer all the effects of living in a racially prejudiced society... What you see in Liverpool to-day is a sign of things to come: it provides a model for all major British cities with significant black populations, therefore, we feel that we must make ourselves clearly heard. In so doing we may avoid recurrence of the riots of 1919 and 1948 in this city and Bristol in 1980 and ensure that any future policies are aimed at finding the solution to institutionalised racism and the discrimination it engenders* (UK House of Commons, 1980).

This sober warning was not, of course, heeded at the time. Nor, despite Ministers for Merseyside and government aid, juxtaposed with a hard-left local city council, has it been heeded since. The bitterly clear exposé of left wing politics in *The Racial Politics of Militant in Liverpool, 1980-86* (Liverpool Black Caucus, 1986) leaves no doubt about the arrogant indifference displayed by the Labour City Council of that period.

Yet Liverpool, like its great rival Manchester, was and is a city of many peoples. In 1881 it had only 81 per cent English-born inhabitants: for obvious geographical reasons its most sizable minority was (and still is) Irish; and the curse of religious division certainly bedeviled Liverpool, and heavily influenced its politics, for many years. Indeed it was the only

English city which managed to elect an Irish Nationalist M.P., a feat achieved by the Scotland Division of the city between 1885 and 1929 (Jackson, 1963, p. 122). Even today it is not clear how deep into the hearts of their congregations goes the obvious tolerance and friendship which the two leaders of the Catholic and Anglican churches display. Liverpool also had a sizable and mainly prosperous Jewish community as well as a sprinkling of others – mainly European – who left their homeland for one reason or another. Yet because the bulk of the non-white population was poor and often competing with the unskilled white workforce, tensions often ran high. It would be understandable if, in 1981, some black families nodded with grim satisfaction as they saw white policemen flee before the attacks of their young people and read the nervous comments in newspapers. Twice before in this century the situation had been reversed. In both 1919 and 1948 there were violent anti-black race riots in the city. The death, at the hands of a lynch mob, of a West Indian seaman whose only crime was being unemployed, was watched by police with indifference in June 1919, whilst in 1948 the police sided with white mobs against black. It is a mark of Liverpool's intransigence that the two other seaports which had similar early inmigration, Cardiff and South Shields, and which had behaved equally as badly in 1919, did not repeat that pattern in 1948. This is perhaps both the best and the worst of Liverpool's individuality: the worst, in that time and again official enquiries recognized 'institutionalised and hardened patterns of discrimination and disadvantage' and the 'interlocking and unique set of disadvantages facing the black community in Liverpool'; and the best, because hopefully it is unique.

Hopes for the future

Of course, it would be untrue to suggest that other cities do not experience discrimination, or that there is no disadvantage elsewhere, or that immigrants whatever their skin colour are always welcome. Residents of Bradford or Manchester or a hundred other British cities would certainly not agree to that proposition. The patchwork needs careful repair in most places. There is confusion and disagreement about what sort of repairs are needed or whether the whole fabric needs tearing up and a new start made. Indeed, there is a vast body of literature which argues that all British cities are racist because Britain is racist: the majority white population cannot cure the problem because it is the problem. Set in the well-rehearsed arguments about the evils of Empire, colonialism and capitalism, the views expressed are both emotional and persuasive. Somewhat less persuasive are the strident race-awareness and anti-racist training sessions which punctuate the life of some cities at the behest of their doctrinaire councils. Much of this has had the reverse effect of

setting up active ill-will and resentment where none was present before, not least among those who themselves come from an ethnic minority but who are happy to feel that they, or their parents or grandparents, are well settled in. They may express the view that since they had to learn to adapt why shouldn't other people? They are not best pleased by the reply that in adapting to the host population they are playing the colonialist's game.

Such debates are played out against a continuing ignorance of many of the raw facts about minority groups, not least about their numbers. Everybody (whatever their beliefs) plays the numbers game: percentages of which minority is where soar or decline according to who is speaking, since there are no accurate figures of ethnic origins. No agreement about a question on ethnicity could be reached for the 1981 census. It is to be hoped that the 1991 census, with its agreed question about ethnic origin, may throw some sensible light on this fraught question; although it is now rumoured that there may be unions or pressure groups who will direct their members to ignore this question on the grounds that information will be used for deportation and other nefarious purposes. If this means further reliance on 'guesstimates' it will only confirm the view that reason flies out of the window when the issue of race comes in through the door.

Local democratic involvement

The future for our patchwork cities, with their different patterns of populations, all caught in the warp of geography and the weft of history, must lie in less aggressive, less emotional approaches. It is a good time to start questioning accepted scenarios. The first need to be addressed must be that of creating more robust local democratic accountability. The collapse of communist governments in Europe is in danger of breeding a belief that the combination of liberal democracy and capitalism, as practised in North America and the European Community, is not far short of perfection. That patently is nonsense. The industrial cities of Britain, especially those which made their wealth out of the old staples of textiles, ships and iron, are well aware that capitalism can mortally wound just as much as a command economy can collectively strangle. However, even if capitalism seems to have greater staying power and even if market forces are unassailable, it is important to see how their impact can be softened on those who have no way of fighting their corner in the market place.

At the other extreme, experience has already shown that cities cannot flourish if a culture of dependency creates a mixture of apathy and alienation. So far Britain has not managed to come up with a system that might meet the contrasting needs of the 'comfortable' and 'uncomfortable' sectors of society. The inadequacies of the Welfare State as constituted in 1945 were all too apparent even before the ideologues of the Conservative right wing got to work on it. Paradoxically, however, some of their hatchet

work has served mainly to make the hatchet-wielders unpopular and lay a false haze of belief that all would be well if social services like the Health Service were given more generous sums of money, pensions and child benefit were increased, and the principle of universality for benefits were reinstated. Countless opinion polls tell us what a sensible and warm-hearted nation the British are: we say we would prefer no tax cuts and that additional resources should be spent on all sorts of worthwhile social objectives. If this is really so, perhaps there is a need to follow through the thinking of that most skilfully pragmatic of present-day politicians, the Prime Minister of France, Michel Rocard:

> *Liberons-nous des fausses pudeurs devant les sondages, acceptons cette realité et le débat politique repartira sure des bases sérieuses... le peuple est plus intelligent que quiconque et il sait ce qu'il veut, et surtout ce qu'il ne veut pas.* (Let us now free ourselves from false modesty in the face of opinion polls; let us accept the reality of the force of public opinion. The political debate will then be able to take off from secure foundations... ordinary people are more intelligent than anyone and they know what they want and, above all, what they do not want.)

If, as a nation, the British are indeed willing to make sacrifices for the greater good, how can such altruism best be used? Is pouring more money into the bottomless pit of modern medical research and techniques really going to help those caught in the inner-city trap of no skills, unemployment and poor housing? Would it not be better to implement a simpler, fairer means of income support? It should not be the humiliating or exhausting experience that it is at present to get financial help in the face of hazards such as unemployment, illness, or other misfortune. Nor, however, should the help be given to those who choose idleness or have it thrust upon them because they refuse to take up educational opportunities or cannot stick to a job because it is seen as 'slave labour'. Workfare and worthwhile compulsory training should be tied to some of the entitlements and it would be as well to remember M. Rocard's other warning:

> *... je tire deux idées que j'ai toujours en tête dans la conduite gouvernmentale: les mésures difficiles ne sont pas forcement des mésures impopulaires, mais les mésures impopulaires sont forcement de mauvaises mésures, soit en elles-mêmes, soit parce qu'on n'a pas su en expliquer les vertus.* (I draw on two ideas which I have always followed in the conduct of government: difficult measures are not necessarily unpopular ones; but unpopular measures are always bad ones, either bad in themselves or because no one has known how to explain their merits.)

This need for dialogue is one that is all too often omitted, even in the most sophisticated liberal democracies. It is too often a question of being

told, as all those who were decanted into giant new housing estates learnt not so long ago. In Rocard's words,

> *Les politiques se voient et se vivent toujours comme l'avant-garde consciente et organisée des masses populaires, sachant mieux qu'elles ou est leur intérêt et se faisant un devoir et un honneur de leur imposer les transformations que le peuple n'est pas assez lucide pour deviner spontanément.* (Politicians always see themselves and conduct themselves as the thinking and organized vanguard of ordinary people, knowing better than they what is in their best interests and making it an honour and duty to impose on them changes which people do not immediately accept because they do not sufficiently understand them.)

Listening to people, letting them suggest, amend, and initiate must be the key to the next stage for the cities, not hectoring, directing and scolding.

A promising way for British cities was indeed incorporated into the 1972 Local Government Act which gave cities the power to designate 'urban parishes', and thereby to create elected bodies for small areas within cities, but government has never shown enthusiasm in pursuing its implementation and neither have most of the great cities. An exception is Birmingham whose present Council leader, Dick Knowles, has been an advocate of 'local neighbourhood councils' for many years. But Birmingham has found that grass-roots democracy does not spring eager and panting from every city street, and that budding Joe Chamberlains seem few and far between. Manchester has tried to introduce decentralization through the creation of 'mini town-halls' and self-selecting neighbourhood advisory groups, but they too have run into difficulties both of finance and enthusiasm. Nevertheless compulsory voting and the right for such small units to raise reasonable sums of money from whatever form of taxation or fund-raising they choose might help to concentrate the minds of the electorate. There are plenty of small-scale voluntary organizations in our cities which thrive and engender enthusiasm and interest. In Manchester the Council for Voluntary Services offers an information pack which lists almost 1,500 voluntary organizations within the city alone, and these are no longer dominated simply by traditional middle-class agencies. Tenants' groups on council housing estates have become one of the more promising features of the last decade, as have self-build organizations. Such examples of ebullient local community organizations suggests that, while currently only patchy, small-scale democracy only needs a kick-start to help to bring it into the mainstream of the more potent statutory political thrum of municipal life.

Local finances

But, if the needs of ethnic minorities are to be met more readily and more sensitively at local level, a second prerequisite is adequate financing for local authorities. One of the tragedies of the last ten years, when the industrial cities have faced their greatest economic challenge, has been the mean-minded and vindictive attitude of central government towards local authorities; an attitude partly justified by the gross incompetence of some authorities and also by their insistence on using their position to fight national political issues, but one which has now gone to the extreme of removing much of what healthy independence local authorities once had, of making local government a mere executive arm of central government, thereby ignoring the strength of having bodies which can respond more sensitively to the variabilities of different areas. Liverpool remains the archetypal suicidal city riding grandly on its Militant charger into debt, strikes and surcharging (closely followed by some London boroughs), but even Manchester has managed to dissipate years of hard-won financial reserves and has made life unnecessarily hard for itself and its citizens. Bradford, boldly mounting an equally lumpen shire horse, recently tried trundling gamely down the Thatcherite road, only to stumble in May 1990 as its citizens decided that cuts, cuts and more cuts were not their chosen diet, hilal or otherwise. Central government claims that an annual £4 billion has been channelled to cities through its urban policy; the cities claim with justification that much of the benefit of that resource has been counterbalanced by the withdrawal of yet larger sums which previously came through central allocation of both mainstream spending and central support for local taxation (Robson, 1988).

As they tunnel through a period of major economic readjustment to their new role as service centres, big cities need more predictable resources, with fewer strings, in order to facilitate their transformation. Plainly, the future demands a system of financing local expenditure which is both more secure and less open to political manoeuvring than has so far been the case. Equally plainly the poll tax is not the answer, but neither is a revamped form of the domestic rates (tax on property) likely to garner the necessary resources. Perhaps the best way might be a system of five year allotments based on indicators such as poverty, housing need, unemployment, single parents, age structure and the like, with a local authority having the right to raise additional sums locally up to a certain level by any tax system it chose. Such a system might introduce longer-term predictability to local resources, and stop some of the unnecessary annual political posturing and in-fighting which has dogged the last few decades.

Legal frameworks

Having set up more democratic structures and provided more adequate funding, what might then be the future for our cities? There could still be an unpleasant worst-case scenario in which discrimination, racial harassment, xenophobia, jingoism, aggressive Muslim fundamentalism and black nationalism dominate the final patterns of the patchwork. More democracy, despite M. Rocard's optimism, can be hijacked by very undemocratic mobs, and even the most sensible of funding systems can be misapplied. So a third requirement is for a more effective legislative framework which addresses the practice of racial discrimination. As the race relations industry has yet to learn, anti-discrimination legislation is only as good as its drafting and implementation. That is where energy ought to be concentrated, not on the fruitless task of trying to police people's minds and hearts.

In any case, opinion polls and surveys suggest that the majority of people are neither bigoted nor vindictive. 'Fair play' still rates highly as a virtue, commercialization and media distortion notwithstanding, whilst a clear sense of justice surfaces time and again in the most unlikely ways. A recent case tried in the Crown Court in Liverpool (October 1990), which to the presiding judge patently appeared a case of straightforward guilt, was seen rather differently by the 12 citizens who comprised the jury. This was the case of young men accused of rioting in Risley Remand Centre, an infamously unpleasant institution near Manchester in which conditions had been lambasted by the Prison Inspectorate only days before the riot. The jury was unmoved by film showing the accused in roof-top protests and similar activities, and it plainly took the natural justice view that the rioters had suffered enough just through being in Risley. Similarly, in a recent case in Manchester Magistrates' Court, a black youth was arraigned by the police on the grave offence of public disorder, merely on the grounds that he had raised two fingers to a passing police-car. The senior magistrate on the bench, while looking and sounding the archetypal white colonialist, dismissed the case in no uncertain terms, leaving the police in little doubt as to the magistrates' view of their behaviour. The British Crime Survey shows that, even when burgled, people would rather have their goods back or compensation than harsh punishment of the offenders. Time and time again, when asked what worries them most about a neighbourhood, people say 'litter, vandalism, graffiti'.

The chief challenge for the majority population is to ensure that the innate sense of fairness and justice in large numbers of people is encouraged to flourish. This may require some strict control over the media, who have managed to whip up a great deal of ignorance, hatred and prejudice over the past forty years. This has ranged from the hysteria of reports on inner-city disturbances, through fanning the fears of swamping through immigration, to the one-sided a-historical emotionalism

of the race relations industry. Even more important is the need to try to educate the seemingly uneducable oafs who indulge in racial harassment. Every effort should be made not only to bring them to justice but to give considerable publicity to swingeing punishments. Currently there is considerable discussion about discrimination in the criminal justice system in Britain, and it is obvious that not only is there a realization that something is wrong, but also there is a will to put it right. However it will be important that such willingness extends to a reform of the police complaints procedure, as well as to tighter control over police forces and the mechanism for bringing charges on certain issues. Laws ensuring equal opportunity and for dealing with discrimination at work do exist, but some of them lack teeth or are not used with enough vigour. When firms have successfully implemented equal opportunity policy this too should be well publicized.

Responses from ethnic groups

It would, however, be both foolish and naïve to think that even the most flexible and sensitive of political and economic structures will necessarily produce a harmonious social framework. The inexorable interplay of geography and history which made our cities has also helped, over the centuries, to make a nation that has been both insular and arrogant, and that has singularly failed to cope with changing circumstances, especially when those changes meant loss of power and wealth. Immigrants to any country rarely find their way strewn with roses: they are the outsiders, they offer both a potential and a threat. Those arriving in Britain over the years may have found it marginally easier according to their wealth and status but even the rich would not have been immediately accepted into the host society. Nathan Rothschild, arriving in Manchester from Frankfurt in 1800 with all the wealth and business acumen of his family behind him, found it easy to set up business and build an elegant house, but he did not choose to stay there for long. His English was not fluent and he appears not to have been at ease with his fellow Jewish merchants (Williams, 1976, pp. 17-20). No such freedom of choice was available to immigrants who were trapped in poverty, as thousands from all over continental Europe as well as Ireland were to discover. Many endured hardship, intolerance and harassment. Yet some of their descendants are amongst the least sympathetic towards the plight of more recent immigrants.

It is undeniable that there is hostility between immigrant groups who bring their own historic prejudices with them. Indeed, one important factor which is too often overlooked in the immigrant mix of cities is the tensions among groups who are perceived by the indigenous population as being Asian. Robinson (1986, p. 241) suggests that the 'Asian' immigrant population can be separated into at least twelve groups:

Rural East African Gujerati Muslims

Urban East African Gujerati Muslims

Rural Indian Gujerati Muslims

Urban Indian Gujerati Muslims

East African Urdu-speaking Muslims

Indian Urdu-speaking Muslims

East African Gujerati Hindus

Indian Gujerati Hindus

Pakistani Urdu-speaking Muslims

Urban Pakistani Punjabi Muslims

Rural Pakistani Punjabi Muslims

Punjabi Sikhs

His research in Blackburn, on the edge of the Manchester conurbation, suggests that East African Asians did not see themselves as having much in common with Pakistanis and that 25 per cent named them as their least preferred ethnic group. Field work in Gujurat State confirmed this attitude and emphasized the view that the East African Gujeratis saw the Pakistanis as

> ... *the group who generated feelings of racism amongst the white population in Britain because they were uneducated factory workers who had militant tendencies, who were in the vanguard of strikes, exploited the immigration rules, practised polygamy, and even married their own sisters* (Robinson, 1986, p. 159).

The East African Asians have also shown themselves to be more competitive and more successful in the housing market and to be achieving more economic success (Robinson, 1986, pp. 158-168). The political use of the term 'black' as a generic term to cover all non-white peoples united in the fight against white capitalist imperialism has not proved as popular as its advocates had hoped, and the use of it as a shorthand form can give rise to some highly critical reactions, not least from groups like the Chinese and some of those listed above.

For those who dream of a 'black' revolution with or without lashings of blood, preferably white blood, being shed, the lack of unity among the non-white immigrant population is a constant source of dismay and bewilderment. It is easy to suggest that it is the result of an evil conspiracy by white imperialism which has driven wedges between black brothers and sisters. For those who turn mainstream prejudice on its head to see

everything black as good and everything white as bad, there are plenty of simplistic solutions on offer.

In fact both the majority white population and the diverse ethnic populations of all colours are going to have to tackle certain issues. But it will require help from within the ethnic groups, particularly from those who wield influence over young people and who for too long have taken a negative stance. The part to be played by so-called community leaders, who have spent so much of the last few years complaining and finding reasons why they should not co-operate with anybody, needs to be re-examined. So does the role of the well-to-businessmen who happily fly on endless visits 'home' and want ever greater sums of public money spent on their particular community in Britain.

Nor is it satisfactory that many such influential figures want to keep their communities encapsulated and separated from the host population. The Asian business or professional man may well behave like the 'professional Pakistani' in the company of English people and give the impression that he has been fully assimilated into English culture, while he may behave as a strict Pakistani when interacting with other Pakistanis. The same holds true for those Pakistani 'marginal men' (leaders) who represent the community to the wider society and may appear to be '*assimilados*' (Anwar, 1979, p. 222). It must remain unhelpful that such encapsulation encourages ways of life which run contrary to the mores of the host population. This will become increasingly important as more young women begin to realize that their inferior position in their encapsulated societies owes more to male tradition than to the teachings of the Koran.

If ethnic groups wish to remain encapsulated, even to the extent of separate schools and their own mother tongue, then they must also accept that there can be no equal opportunity for them in the job market, where a good and clear command of English must be a priority, followed by the major European languages. Few people would, and nobody should, resent any group wishing to maintain its own language and culture through its own efforts, but one of the burdens borne by any immigrant anywhere is the knowledge that he or she has decided to leave the birthplace behind. One of the chief strains on our patchwork is the resentment felt by the indigenous population, who feel that some immigrants want, and possibly get, the best of two worlds. In Manchester, for example, some white parents draw attention to the fact that their children can count only in Urdu and not in English, and much of the bitter discussion which has arisen from this claim has centred on the jealousy displayed by poor white people for poor Asian people.

These sorts of bitterness cannot be eliminated overnight: our cities are not suddenly going to become havens of sweetness and light. But there is hope. A major reason for hope lies in the fact that, as yet, there are still no real ghettos in British cities. Across the whole array of different cities

with their varying ethnic compositions, while there may be spatial concentrations of ethnic groups, there are no cases of uniformly ethnic minority neighbourhoods, and many of the ethnic households are widely dispersed in suburban locations. Even London, which has the highest proportion of ethnic minorities, shows a significant degree of residential dispersion. The fact that some ethnic groups prefer to stay together has its own merit, since it means that there is a mixture of prosperity within that community.

Any real hopes for the future must, of course, be predicated on a belief that there are economic roles for the big cities in which ethnic minorities are still differentially concentrated. Improved ethnic relations would have little significance in the face of an accelerating economic collapse. So the final and most critical issue is to ask how plausible are the broader arguments about the economic future of large cities.

Given a more stable and coherent urban policy from central government, I believe that big cities have considerable potential as they emerge from the last two decades during which they have been responding to the economic change of deindustrialization. Their future will move them away from being 'producer places' to being predominantly 'consumer places': places where, on the one hand, a mixture of producer and consumer services offer professional services and leisure and recreational opportunities, and, on the other, small-scale information-dependent industry will invest in those cities which can develop a good infrastructure of data networks. Such developments are wholly consistent with broader contemporary trends that help to spell out a more ebullient future for cities. The fragmentation of production, seen in management buy-outs, has produced a sharp growth of small information-dependent firms. The growth of environmental concern strengthening the argument for investment in public transport, will work to the benefit of cities. The threat of recession will diminish the likelihood of an accelerating outflow of investment and population. The probable growth of mass migration could bring new waves of in-migrants to the cities.

This last development is especially germane to the concern about ethnic groups, since the onset of large-scale migration could, interestingly, re-establish the role that industrial cities originally played as reception centres in the eyes of the Chicago ecologists. Contrary to forebodings, Britain could happily absorb new immigrants should the Hong Kong Chinese or Eastern Europeans be encouraged to enter the country. The successful saga of the regeneration of part of Manchester's central business district through the immigration of large numbers of entrepreneurial Chinese in the last decade is a hopeful augury. New waves of immigrants might not initially find it any easier than other groups have done, but even this ex-imperial power is beginning to learn, like Housman, that there never were any 'lesser breeds without the Law', only people like oneself:

... a stranger and afraid
In a world I never made.

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5 European Cities in the 1990s: Problems and Prospects

Michael Parkinson

Introduction

The 1990s will be a decade of rapid change which will present a series of major challenges to cities within and beyond the European Community. The creation of the single market in 1992 and the opening of the borders to the East in particular will intensify many of the economic, social, cultural and environmental trends that have been visible within European cities during the past three decades. But in other respects those developments will break the mould of the immediate past, creating new opportunities – and potential threats – for many cities.

Continuity in the European urban system will be reinforced during the 1990s by the continuing globalization and restructuring of the international economy which advantages some areas and disadvantages others, creating uneven economic and social development both between and within regions and between and within cities. Many of the trends that have occurred during the past three decades in Northern Europe, and that have appeared in Southern Europe in the 1980s, will continue in the 1990s. The decline of the agricultural and manufacturing sectors and the rise of the service sector, with their profound urban and regional implications, will continue. The success of medium-sized towns and the flow of people and jobs from larger cities to the suburbs and beyond will continue. The economic marginalization of peripheral regions may also continue.

But during the 1990s changes will inevitably stem from the single European market, the weakening of national boundaries and the potential

rise of an inclusive European culture. These will create new economic and cultural forms and give further opportunities for successful cities. But they may also allow some unsuccessful cities to emerge from the shadow of economic failure. The growing renaissance of many older cities, as new social groups return to them and new economic and cultural activities develop within them, which also occurred during the 1980s, will also continue. All of these factors will encourage the emergence of a new European urban hierarchy. Predicting the future shape of urban Europe – the shifting economic functions and fortunes of cities and the new networks and linkages that will emerge between them – is a crucial task for European policy makers. Inevitably, it is difficult to foresee all the macro level forces that will shape the European urban system during the 1990s, but they will clearly include the following:

- the process of democratization in Eastern Europe;
- moves towards political unity in the European Community;
- the development of the single market and its impact upon the dynamics of the international economy and on capital's locational decision making;
- the impact of local, national and European urban and regional policies;
- the environmental impact of overcrowding and pollution;
- changing life-styles and patterns of consumption;
- the changing functions of cities under the twin tendencies towards specialization and standardization;
- the implications of developments in telecommunications and enhanced transport infrastructure.

A considerable amount of analytic and empirical work, attempting to construct league tables of urban success or failure has already described the economic, demographic and social changes taking place in Europe. However, far less is known about the dynamic processes that drive those trends and shape the internal functioning of cities, the relationships between them and the roles cities play on a regional, national, European or world stage. That must be our research priority. The task is to identify the economic, institutional, political, social, cultural and technological dynamics encouraging or inhibiting change in the European urban system. If the development of scenarios for the 1990s and beyond, and a discussion of their policy implications for the Community, are to be reliable, these must rest on an explicit, coherent analysis of the dynamics of the current European urban system.

Urbanization in Western Europe 1960-90

Europe has become increasingly urbanized in the last three decades. By 1981, over two-thirds of West Europeans were living in urban areas with a population in excess of 300,000. Moreover, over 50 per cent of the citizens of the twelve European Community (EC) countries lived in the largest 122 cities. However, the impact of economic, demographic, political and cultural trends on urbanization has varied over the last 30 years and between different European cities. Even so, urbanization and counter-urbanization trends have followed identifiable patterns during this period.

In the 1950s, the larger the city the more likely it was to experience population growth through immigration. London and Paris grew especially rapidly at this time, but this trend was found in every country in Western Europe. The 1960s, however, marked the end of this strong correlation between migration rates and city size. During this period, there was a shift towards more dispersed population growth, especially in the northwestern European countries. By the end of the decade a clear pattern of counter-urbanization had emerged.

Whilst rural-urban migration in developing regions continued to increase the populations of larger cities in the 1970s, by the end of the decade urbanization was a dominant feature only in Spain and Greece. For example, the rapid growth of the Dublin and Lisbon metropolitan areas had tailed off or reversed by the end of the 1970s, even though Madrid and Athens continued to grow at a significant rate (see Table 5.1).

During the 1970s in several EC member states – Belgium, Denmark, France, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and West Germany – the relationship between migration and settlement size was reversed. The largest cities lost population and many smaller urban areas experienced rapid growth. For instance, Glasgow, London, Hamburg, Copenhagen, Amsterdam, Brussels, Frankfurt and Rotterdam all experienced population loss in this period. But, at the same time, many smaller cities grew, for example Norwich, Ravensberg, Bristol, Eindhoven, Grenoble and Montpellier.

Recent trends in the 1980s indicate a more diverse pattern of urban change. There is no longer a simple relationship between settlement size and urban growth or decline, although strong counter-urbanization trends have persisted in West Germany. Rather, the broad movement has been from cities in economically peripheral European regions to those in the European economic 'core'. In other words, in the 1980s the majority of urban areas in 'core' regions grew, irrespective of size, whereas a majority of places in peripheral regions declined. For example, population decline in the two largest cities in Europe, London and Paris, has been checked and, although latest census data are awaited, there are some indications that both cities may be expanding slowly. However, only the wider

Table 5.1
Recent population changes in major European cities
(population to nearest thousand)

	CITY				METROPOLITAN AREA			
	1970	1980	1986	% Change 1970-86	1970	1980	1986	% Change 1970-86
A. 'Adjusting' Regions								
Amsterdam	820	712	679 (1985)	-17.20 (1970-85)	1,095	1,044	1,024	- 6.48 (1970-86)
Barcelona	1,742	1,752 (1981)	1,702	- 2.30	2,706	3,096 (1981)	3,032	+ 12.04
Birmingham	1,098 (1971)	1,007 (1981)	--	- 8.29 (1971-81)	--	2,684	2,657 (1983)	- 1.10 (1980-83)
Brussels	161	142	137	-14.91	1,075	997 (1981)	977	- 9.11
Copenhagen	725	585	556 (1987)	-23.32 (1970-87)	1,389	1,388	1,347 (1987)	- 3.02 (1970-87)
Genoa	842	775	727	-13.66	--	--	--	--
Glasgow	881 (1975)	774 (1981)	734 (1985)	-16.69 (1975-85)	2,505 (1975)	2,415 (1981)	2,359 (1985)	- 5.82 (1975-85)
Hamburg	1,794	1,645	1,580 (1985)	-11.93 (1970-85)	--	1,898 (1980)	--	--
Lille	195 (1968)	169 (1982)	155 (1986)	-20.52 (1968-86)	992 (1968)	1,043 (1975)	1,048 (1982)	+ 5.64 (1968-82)
London	--	--	--	--	7,452 (1971)	6,713 (1981)	6,767 (1985)	- 9.20 (1971-85)
Marseille	888 (1968)	872 (1982)	840 (1986)	- 5.41 (1968-86)	965 (1968)	1,074 (1975)	1,108 (1982)	+ 14.81 (1968-82)

Paris	2,591 (1968)	2,300 (1975)	2,176 (1982)	-16.02 (1968-82)	9,245 (1968)	9,877 (1975)	10,071 (1982)	+ 8.93 (1968-82)
Rome	2,779	2,916	2,826 (1985)	+ 1.69 (1970-85)	--	--	--	--
Rotterdam	687	579	571	-16.89	--	--	--	--
B. 'Growing' Regions								
Cologne	847	1,015 (1981)	966	+14.04	--	--	--	--
Frankfurt	667	631	615	- 7.80	--	--	--	--
Lyon	520 (1968)	456 (1975)	413 (1982)	-20.58 (1968-82)	1,066 (1968)	1,121 (1975)	1,101 (1982)	+ 3.28 (1968-82)
Milan	1,733 (1971)	1,603 (1981)	1,495	-13.74 (1971-86)	3,163 (1971)	3,227 (1981)	3,221	+ 1.83 (1971-86)
Munich	1,294	1,299	1,282 (1985)	- 0.93 (1970-85)	2,112	2,301	2,316 (1985)	+ 9.65 (1970-85)
C. 'Developing' Regions								
Dublin	568 (1971)	526 (1981)	502	-11.62 (1971-86)	852 (1971)	1,003 (1981)	1,021	+19.83 (1971-86)
Lisbon	760	808 (1981)	829	+ 9.07	1,781	2,621	2,578	+44.75
Madrid	3,121	3,159 (1981)	3,058 (1985)	- 2.02 (1970-85)	3,761	4,687 (1981)	4,786	+27.25
Naples	1,227 (1971)	1,212 (1981)	1,201 (1987)	- 2.12 (1971-87)	2,710 (1971)	2,971 (1981)	3,087	+13.97 (1971-86)

Source: Eurocities data.

metropolitan areas are experiencing growth. The urban cores continue to decline, although at a slower rate than in the past.

The European 'core' refers to the most successful 'growing' economic regions in Europe, which are characterized by low unemployment and high income levels. Geographically, they include the highly urbanized triangle between London, Paris and the Rhine-Ruhr area in Germany, the densely populated and economically powerful urban corridor stretching from Amsterdam to Basel, and the cities of the Alpine Belt which are a favoured location for the profitable and expanding high-technology industrial sector.

However, this does not mean that cities in peripheral regions cannot be profitable or expand, or that cities in 'core' regions are without urban problems. For instance, Rennes is a successful city in a peripheral region and Marseille a relatively failing city in a successful region. The implication is that a city's relative success depends more on its functional economic roles than simply on its size or even its location. In other words, the economic success or failure of cities will be a major factor in determining which cities grow and decline in the 1990s and will shape the future European urban system.

The Regional Dimension

There is, however, no simple correlation between migration flows and population growth and decline. The demise of rural-urban migration as a critical factor in urbanization means that the major dynamics of population change for urban areas now include migration from beyond regional boundaries and local rates of natural increase. In other words, there is an important regional dimension to the growth and decline of cities.

The regions of Europe vary substantially but can be broadly defined as growing, adjusting or developing. We have already observed the characteristics of growing regions. By contrast, developing regions are those undergoing a rapid transformation from a traditional agrarian to a more modern industrial economic base. Predominantly but not exclusively located in southern Europe, they are characterized by low income and productivity levels with relatively high proportions of the labour force still actively employed within the agricultural sector. Adjusting regions are the traditional industrial regions, predominantly located in northern Europe, which face structural adjustment problems following the decline of the heavy industrial and port-based economic sectors. They are characterized by high levels of unemployment and a skills base largely inappropriate to contemporary economic demands.

Notwithstanding the importance of functional economic roles for urban success, it is possible to identify a coherent pattern of broad regional and urban trends which corresponds with this regional typology.

(1) In the developing regions of the Community, and the cities within them, birth rates remain well above mortality rates – for instance, Ireland and Dublin, Andalucia and Sevilla, Campania and Naples. Consequently, despite net outmigration, total population levels continue to rise.

(2) In the growing, more economically prosperous, regions of the European 'core', lower or even negative rates of natural increase ensure a more stable or even declining population, despite net immigration rates – for instance, in Lombardia and Milan.

(3) Many of the traditional industrial regions of Europe are not only characterized by net out-migration. They also have minimal natural increase and face population decline in most of their urban centres - for instance, Glasgow in Strathclyde, Liverpool in Merseyside and Essen in the Ruhr.

During the last three decades there has been major economic restructuring throughout Europe. The decline of traditional industries, the industrialization of agriculture, and the rising economic importance of the 'post-industrial' high technology and service sectors have had major spatial implications. These trends have caused particular problems for the developing and traditional industrial regions of Europe, and the cities within them, which have been less successful at adapting to the new economic order.

In the 1990s, however, economic and social change will be of a different nature from that of previous years. The most severe structural upheavals in the European economy appear to have taken place. Depopulation of rural areas, although likely to continue, will be at a much reduced rate, and declining fertility rates in peripheral regions and their cities will reduce pressure on migration to the European 'core'. These changes should contribute to increased stability of the European urban system. However, the uncertainty of cities' future economic success or failure, together with the possibility of major immigration from outside the Community, may be destabilizing influences, so that the growth and decline of cities in Europe remain difficult to predict. Nevertheless, a number of factors that will have an important impact on cities can be identified.

At the strategic level, the development of the Single European Market (SEM) is likely to have an impact on inter-regional migration within the EC, as well as on immigration from outside the Community's borders. The SEM is likely to lead to a stronger European economy, and growing disparities in economic wealth between the EC and surrounding countries. This widening economic divide is likely to raise demand for migration into

the EC, not only from North Africa but also through the newly opened borders of Eastern Europe. The countries of North Africa teeter on the edge of a population explosion – an estimated one million young men enter the already crowded labour markets of the Mahgreb each year. At the same time, the historic politicaal changes in Eastern Europe have created another massive supply of potential economic migrants.

The destination of new economic migrants is more difficult to predict but it seems reasonable to assume, not least because of ex-colonial and language links, that migrants of North African origin will primarily settle, at least initially, in urban areas of France which offer established North African communities and economic opportunity, whereas East European, and especially East German, economic migrants are more likely to settle in German cities with the best employment prospects. Whilst the SEM should bring overall benefit to the EC, the distribution of its benefits is likely to be geographically uneven. Cities in the European 'core', like Milan, Nice and Frankfurt, are more likely to benefit economically than those in the peripheral regions, such as Thessaloniki, Sevilla, Oporto, Dublin and Glasgow.

Demographic trends in Europe in the 1990s are likely to be characterized by increasing internal stability, because of lower rates of migration and natural increase. But externally induced instability, due to the economic attractiveness of the Community to potential economic migrants from surrounding countries, may increase.

Patterns of Urbanization in the 1990s

The interplay of forces that determine economic success or failure with the social forces shaping urbanization is so complex that predictions about the future of European cities are inevitably speculative. However, in terms of future migration trends, the most likely pattern is a modest inter-regional migrational shift from urban areas of all sizes in peripheral regions to urban areas of all sizes in 'core' regions. Potentially more significant is the inward migration from outside the EC's borders. This international population movement is likely to be directed predominantly to these same urban areas, especially those offering similar languages and established ethnic communities.

However, as we have observed, growing regions in the economic 'core' often have low, if not negative, rates of natural increase which should restrain urban growth. Nevertheless, urban areas which have profitable economic roles in the European and global economy will be more likely to experience demographic as well as economic growth. Equally, cities in the developing and adjusting regions of Europe are likely to continue to decline where rates of natural increase are low, albeit at a slower rate than previously, for example Glasgow and Liverpool. However, they may continue to grow, despite net outmigration, where rates of natural

increase, even though declining, will remain relatively high for some time, for example Sevilla, Naples, Lisbon, Oporto and Dublin.

Not all small or large cities will follow these patterns. There will be exceptions. However, we can conclude that those smaller cities that will gain population and larger cities that will maintain their population levels fall into two broad categories. They will be cities which have either functional economic roles in the new European and global economy, like Montpellier, Swindon, Bristol, Milan, Lyon, Nice, Barcelona and Munich, or cities where relatively high rates of natural increase at least neutralize net out-migration, such as Malaga, Naples, Oporto and Dublin. In the 1990s, cities' economic roles and the spatial markets in which they operate, will increasingly determine their position in the European urban system and influence their propensity to grow or decline.

The changing European urban hierarchy

To understand these trends we need to develop a model of the European urban hierarchy describing the changing functions of, and relationships between, European cities. This will involve defining: spatial markets in which cities may operate, a typology of urban strategies, patterns of regional change and indicators of urban success and failure.

A typology of cities: spatial markets and economic roles in the urban hierarchy

To facilitate the building of scenarios it is necessary to simplify this very complex process. We do this by developing two broad criteria with which to classify cities: the spatial markets in which they operate and their choice of economic roles.

(A) Spatial Markets We can distinguish three main positions in the urban hierarchy which we define as spatial markets: global, European and regional. These are not a set of mutually exclusive categories, but reflect the nature of services which cities typically provide. Cities providing lower order services at the lower levels of the hierarchy may attempt to develop their functions in order to rise up this hierarchy during the 1990s.

'Global cities' play a major role on the world stage as well as being significant at lower levels of the hierarchy. They are not necessarily capitals of nation states, but can be more readily identified by their functional characteristics, particularly their significance as centres of international finance and for the provision of horizontal services, for example, research, design, consultancy, research and insurance. A further indication of global status is a city's capacity to attract the European headquarters of multinational corporations.

'European cities', in addition to their regional importance in their own countries, play a role in the wider European urban system. The indicators which might be used to characterize cities as distinctively European would certainly include:

- the presence of regional headquarters of European corporations;
- the existence of strategies through which a city self-consciously promotes itself as 'European';
- recognition of European status by international institutions, e.g. 'European City of Culture';
- membership of European 'networks' and significant linkages with other European cities;
- serving as an administrative capital of national government.

Such 'European' cities may become the most significant level of the urban hierarchy during the 1990s.

'Regional cities' dominate in their respective regions and play a leading role in the provision of:

- regional administrative services
- retail services
- commercial services
- cultural services
- education and health services.

Although they do not typically provide higher level services, our analysis of the changing European system suggests that a number of regional cities will attempt to develop these during the next decade and will compete to move up the urban hierarchy.

(B) City Economic Roles We can identify four distinct, but not mutually exclusive, ideal type city economic roles – the 'technopolis city', the 'consumer city', the 'information city' and the 'welfare city'.

The **'technopolis city'** has leading-edge research and development functions that originated in institutions of higher education and that are likely to be employed in telecommunications, electronics, military or health-related programmes. Central features of the 'technopolis' are its ability to 'spin-off' highly skilled labour and its advanced stage in production technology; these benefit and enhance the development of the local economy. Examples of West European technopoli include municipal research and development strategies (e.g. Bremen), university-led science parks (Groningen, Cambridge), media parks (Cologne, Stuttgart), tele-

parks specialising in telecommunications technology (Nîmes, Hamburg), multi-functional technology parks (Montpellier) and specialized industrial districts endowed with consortia providing technological equipment and advice, financed by local authorities and users (Third Italy).

The **'consumer city'** focuses on the promotion of 'quality of life' issues to act as a magnet to attract capital, skilled labour, tourists and consumers. A strategy to create a convincing attractive urban environment would include prestigious cultural, tourist and retailing attractions, improved design of the urban fabric, modern sports and leisure facilities and select residential developments. In other words, conviviality, quality, diversity and entertainment are the hallmarks of the successful consumer city.

The functions of the **'information city'** include the control and command functions characteristic of the nerve centres of government, finance, telecommunications and the media. To fulfil this information function, however, a city requires extensive development of a modern physical and electronic communications infrastructure.

These roles are not mutually exclusive. Indeed there is a clear correlation between a city's status in the urban hierarchy and the diversity of its economic role. A regional city may adopt a consumer or technopolis role. A city playing a European role however is likely to offer both functions. A global city, or a European city striving for global status, is likely to perform all three functions. More generally, a city relying on consumer services will be less successful in the long-term than those which use those services to support other economic sectors – knowledge, technology, financial and information-based services.

A city that fails to perform or pursue these functional alternatives is likely to fall into a fourth category – the **'welfare city'**. Such cities have lost much of their private sector employment base, and receive little in the way of productive public investment such as defence contracts, higher education spending, or advanced infrastructure. Rather, their inhabitants exist increasingly on governmental transfer payments through social security systems. Clearly, such cities are at the bottom of the urban hierarchy.

How would we characterize the current European urban hierarchy employing this typology? Our judgement would suggest that:

(1) At present only London and Paris can be described as 'global' cities.

(2) A range of cities including Madrid, Barcelona, Milan, Rome, Athens, Munich, Frankfurt, Berlin, Hamburg, Brussels, Amsterdam and Copenhagen can safely be described as 'European'.

(3) Of these European cities, the most likely to attain global status are Milan and Frankfurt, primarily through their importance as 'information cities', and Berlin chiefly through its potential role in the context of a unified Germany and of greater economic and political integration between Western and Eastern Europe.

(4) A range of important 'regional' cities, including Glasgow, Edinburgh, Manchester, Birmingham, Rotterdam, Dusseldorf, Cologne, Marseille, Lyon, Sevilla, Valencia, Genoa and Turin, are currently pursuing (with varying degrees of success) strategies aimed at attaining European status.

(5) The rest of the regional category includes previously European declining cities e.g. Naples, Palermo; economically expanding regional centres e.g. Stuttgart; cities in 'adjusting' regions which have undertaken economic regeneration and regional consolidation strategies, in some cases to strengthen their ability to play on a continental scale e.g. Newcastle, Sheffield, Rennes, Clermont Ferrand, Dortmund; cities at the centre of large peripheral regions e.g. Aberdeen, Bari, Thessaloniki, Oporto; prosperous capitals of largely 'self-sufficient' regional economies which are consciously devoting more resources to improving the local quality of life than to economic development strategies on a European scale e.g. Bologna.

Table 2 identifies a range of cities and their regions which illustrates our typology. The table classifies cities along two dimensions. The first is in terms of the spatial markets in which they will operate in the 1990s. In order to capture the dynamic quality of the system we have added two intermediate categories to our original threefold classification: European cities aspiring to global status and regional cities aspiring to European status. The purpose is to emphasize that this dimension is a continuum rather than a series of self-contained categories. The European hierarchy is fluid and dynamic.

The second dimension we adopt is that of urban success and failure. Again to capture the dynamic quality of the system, this represents not a dichotomy but a continuum on which cities might move up and down over time. Initially we would define a city's relative success in terms of: (a) its economic performance, (b) its environmental and cultural attractiveness, and (c) its level of social cohesion.

EUROPEAN HIERARCHY

SPATIAL MARKETS

		Regional	Regional-European	European	European-Global	Global
URBAN SUCCESS	HIGH					
		RENNES (D)	MONTPELLIER (G)	HAMBURG (A)		
		Bari (D)	LYON (G)	Brussels (A)	MILAN (G)	PARIS
					Frankfurt (G)	
						LONDON
		DORTMUND (A)				
		Bristol (G)	Rotterdam (A)	Amsterdam (A)		
			Seville (D)	Copenhagen (A)	Berlin (A)	
			GLASGOW (A)	Barcelona (A)		
				MADRID (D)		
			MARSEILLES (G)			
			Manchester (A)			
		Oporto (D)	Valencia (D)			
		NAPLES (D)	Dublin (D)			
		LIVERPOOL (A)		ATHENS (D)		
	LOW					

G = Growing Region A = Adjusting Region D = Developing Region

Linkages and networks between European cities

The concept of the 'European city' is likely to become increasingly significant as the strict European/national/regional hierarchy breaks down, enhanced by the twin pressures of the rediscovery of localism and continuing European integration. Cities at the European level will increasingly develop collaborative strategies to mutually enforce their relative pre-eminence. The strategy of cities to establish formal networks with existing 'European' cities (for instance, the commercial and cultural links between such stylish European or aspiring European cities as Barcelona, Milan, Cologne and Glasgow) emphasizes the importance of such networks for place marketing cities. The establishment of the 'Eurocity' network to lobby the European Community on its budget priorities is further evidence of the importance cities attach to such networking.

One can distinguish between European-wide and regional networks. European level networks may be based on the sharing of resources, for example, information, skills, infrastructures and finance, and on the pooling of efforts between cities. Their purpose will be to lobby and compete more effectively at national and European level. Regional networks might formulate integrated marketing strategies for the region or create centres offering a variety of services, for example, technology, research and development and marketing to the local economy.

Cities left outside such European and regional 'clubs' may find themselves increasingly marginalized in terms of both competition and collaboration, and will find it difficult to move up the urban hierarchy. To assess their future role and significance we need to more clearly understand the objectives, operation and impact of economic and cultural networks of 'European' cities.

Cities in regions: the dynamics of growth and decline

Of course, any effort to identify urban futures needs to place cities in their regional context by examining their interaction with their surrounding areas, and the linkages between core cities and subordinate cities, and by exploring alternatives for city growth strategies. It would need to establish the level of government at which a wide range of urban and regional services are provided – housing, transportation, economic development, communications, social services – and the different patterns of fiscal relations within and between regions, and assess the impact these different administrative arrangements have on city and regional development.

As we noted earlier, the regions of Europe vary substantially and can be defined as **adjusting**, **developing** or **growing**. The status of the region will have a major impact upon the fortunes of individual cities. Adjusting

regions are the old industrial regions predominantly located in Northern Europe. Such adjusting regions are faced with structural adjustment problems, following the decline of the heavy-industrial and port-based economic sectors, and are characterized by high levels of unemployment and a skills base largely inappropriate to the economy of the 1990s. Cities in these regions face particular problems.

Developing regions are those undergoing a rapid transformation from an agrarian to an industrial economy. They are predominantly, though not exclusively, concentrated in Southern Europe and are characterized by low income and productivity levels, often accompanied by high unemployment and structural underemployment. Moreover, their labour market profile shows a relatively high proportion of the workforce still actively employed within the agricultural sector. They also experience stress in the provision of social and physical infrastructure because of the legacy of their rapid urbanization.

Growing regions are the most successful economic regions in Europe, with the desired characteristics of low unemployment and high income levels. Several advantages underpin their success. Although they are developed regions, they industrialized later than adjusting regions and have not suffered from dependence upon the declining heavy-industrial and port-based economic sectors. Rather they are a favoured location for the profitable, expanding high-technology industrial sector.

The clearest example of such a successfully growing region is the Alpine belt. It has the geographic advantage of being at the heart of the integrated European economy. It also has considerable environmental advantages, a plethora of historic towns and often spectacular scenic areas. Examples of cities in the Alpine Belt include Grenoble (easy access to the Alps of Savoy), Nice (the *Côte d'Azur* and the Maritime Alps), Montpellier (the *Côte d'Améthyste*, the historic towns of Provence, the Cevennes). Finally, and perhaps most significantly, the Alpine region has benefited from the presence of areas which have all enjoyed strong post-war regional autonomy.

To understand the dynamics that determine the symbiotic relationship between city and region we would need to conduct detailed case studies in accordance with our typology of succeeding and failing cities in developing, growing and adjusting regions. The studies should examine the impact of different functional relationships generated in city-region interaction. In particular we are interested in whether and how regional prosperity is connected to individual cities' performance.

If we return to Table 2, we can see some illustration of cities in their regional context. Rennes in Britanny is a prime example of a succeeding centre in a developing region. Naples is a failing city in a developing region. Milan, Montpellier and Lyon are succeeding cities in growing regions and Marseille is a failing city in a growing region.

City structures, functions and internal dynamics

We also need to understand how internal decision making processes affect the performance of individual European cities, and hence the potential evolution of a new urban hierarchy during the 1990s. We need to focus upon cities' internal dynamics, examining:

- their choice of spatial markets and economic roles;
- their capacity to implement that strategic choice;
- the impact of that choice upon the city itself and also upon its place in the wider European hierarchy.

Cities cannot unilaterally choose the spatial market in which they operate or the economic roles they adopt. They are constrained by their economic, social and environmental resources and the capacity of local leaders to exploit those resources. The resources available to a city are diverse and include the following: (a) the strength and composition of the public and private sectors of the economy and the political relations between the two; (b) its physical location and environmental quality; (c) its urban social structure including, for example, the structure and nature of its class relations; (d) its traditions of entrepreneurial activity; (e) the educational and skill levels of the population; (f) the local experience of emigration and immigration; (g) the existence of and access to favourable national and European resources and legislation; (h) the range and quality of linkages to regional, national and European decision makers.

Studies are needed which assess the resources available to cities and the use of them by city leaders. They should unravel the recent histories of such cities to determine what creates the economic, social and political dynamism that allows the adoption of regeneration strategies. This would explain contrasts, for example, between cities such as Glasgow, Hamburg and Dortmund which, despite facing many constraints during the 1980s, managed to generate more dynamic development strategies than places like Liverpool, Marseille, or Naples. Such comparisons would allow the creation of a typology of urban success and failure which could be used to locate and assess the potential development paths of types of cities in Europe during the next decade and contribute to the process of scenario building and identification of policy implications.

The studies should also focus on the social, economic and political consequences of cities' choice of strategies. It is clear that failing cities in the adjusting regions of Europe experience growing poverty, inequality, fiscal stress, deteriorating environments and social polarization which have major policy implications. However, there is considerable evidence that many successfully-regenerating cities have similar problems. Their

experience suggests that the entrepreneurial search for new niches in the economic order has not necessarily generated equity. Many economic groups and areas within cities have not shared in the benefits of regeneration and have even endured significant social costs.

A potent example is London Docklands, where the process of market-driven economic restructuring, physical renewal and community decline and displacement and segregation is most clearly visible. But the phenomenon is also found in cities as different as Glasgow, which is beginning the process of regeneration, as well as in cities like Rennes or Hamburg which successfully introduced regeneration strategies in the late 1980s. These studies would raise questions about the patterns of social cohesion or fragmentation that may develop in European cities in the 1990s, and the policy initiatives in, for example, training, housing, transportation, planning, local economic development, and welfare provision that will be needed if equity, as well as economic efficiency, is to be achieved.

Scenarios for urban Europe

We have already identified the emerging and continuing trends and influences which will shape the European urban and regional system in the 1990s and beyond. They will clearly raise major policy implications at European, regional and urban level. However, at the wider European level, a series of economic, political, and physical factors will affect the Community.

Economic factors

The development of the single market will have far-reaching implications for the dynamics of the international economy and capital's locational decision making. It is likely that:

- It will lead to increased competition between European cities and regions. This could make it increasingly difficult for national governments to direct external investment to weaker regions. The EC is likely to be better equipped than national governments to respond to inward investment from non-European multinationals.
- It will deepen existing imbalances in the distribution of development between the Community's prosperous core and its poorer peripheries, exacerbating, for example, the north-south divide in Britain and the south-north gap in Italy.
- The enhanced competition and the increasing globalization of capital could seriously undermine the viability of local economies

based on small and medium-sized enterprises, for example, the Marshallian industrial districts in Italy.

Political factors

The process of democratization in Eastern Europe and moves towards political unity in the European Community might lead to:

- A growth in the economic importance of West European regions and cities along the old East-West frontier (e.g. Hamburg), which will act as gateways to the European Community for East European economies.
- A focus on Eastern Europe, which could shift the economic axis of Europe from West to East rather than North to South, and exaggerate the problems facing cities in the developing regions in the South.
- The relative decline of the nation-state in local economic development, which will be enhanced by the increasing globalization of West European economies, the growing importance of Community policies and the decentralization of powers and resources from national to regional and urban governments.

Physical factors

These include new communication and telecommunication infrastructures, and the expected increase in the volume of air, road and rail traffic across the Community as a result of the forthcoming erosion of restrictive practices in the European air transport industry, the creation of an integrated European air traffic control system, freedom of movement for road haulage companies within the Community, and the construction and strengthening of new high speed rail links, international airports and telecommunication links. The likely implications of such developments will include:

- The growing importance of cities as major transport modes. Lyon, for instance, will be one of the hubs of European road and rail links.
- Economic growth along new communication corridors. For example, along the Channel Tunnel rail links in the Pas de Calais region and in Kent.
- Growing competition between cities and regions for the siting of international airports and distribution centres.

- The development of exclusive telecommunication highways between world financial centres like London, Paris and Frankfurt which may be directly linked with New York, Los Angeles, Tokyo and Hong Kong.

Environmental factors

The supranational nature of environmental problems – the greenhouse effect, acid rain, holes in the ozone layer, sea and river pollution – and the presence of pollution caused by traffic or particular industries will have major implications for European regional development policies. These will include:

- Continuation of the trend towards the concentration of heavy urban traffic and of dangerous and polluting industrial plants in cities of all member states. In particular, the concentration of pollution around cities like Athens, Palermo and Naples means that the core-periphery divide in Europe could become more pronounced in environmental as well as economic terms.
- Exaggeration of the problem that many cities in Western Europe are already experiencing – problems of congestion, overcrowding, lack of affordable housing, lack of amenities and green space and deterioration in the quality of public services such as public transport and environmental maintenance. These will have a major impact not only on the local quality of life but also on cities' economic viablility because of their inability to attract, for example, new investment and skilled people.

Policy implications for the European Community

The final section of this paper identifies a range of issues which, in the light of these scenarios, may require the attention of EC policymakers. To contextualize this task we can identify the rationale underpinning EC regional policy and the policy instruments currently employed.

The objectives of EC policy have been defined as:

- to foster the balanced development of regions within member states and within the Community, making optimum use of growth potentialities;
- to reduce regional disparities, measured primarily by income levels;
- to reduce concentration in congested regions;

- to ease the cost of adjustment, especially the costs on poorer residents of larger cities;
- to assist the process of change to enable cities to efficiently perform the rather different economic and social roles they will have in the future ... [by] ... improving the attractiveness of cities as places to live and work.

To achieve these objectives the EC employs a diverse range of policy instruments including:

The European Coal and Steel Community

The European Agricultural Guarantee and Guidance Fund

The European Investment Bank

The European Social Fund

The European Regional Development Fund.

The major economic, social, political and environmental changes and developments that will take place in Europe in the 1990s and beyond will have far-reaching implications for the Community's cities and regions.

A preliminary assessment would suggest that the following policy questions at least will justify particular consideration:

(1) Since regional problems are increasingly urban in character, does regional policy require a more explicit urban dimension policy consideration? The blackspots of urban deprivation that exist throughout the Community, in growing as well as developing and adjusting regions, will need to be addressed. Existing regional policy may be appropriate for large-scale infrastructural projects but it is not designed for a more local urban policy that encompasses economic, social, environmental and cultural dimensions.

(2) Should the promotion of self-sufficient regions be a long-term objective, or is the aim of policy simply to ensure a more even distribution of development across the Community?

(3) Should 'positive' urban policies aimed at encouraging growth be combined with 'negative policies' to control growth and protect the environment – particularly in growing regions but also, where appropriate, in adjusting and developing regions?

(4) How far are different successful economic development formulas (for example the Third Italy industrial district or the German science park) transferable concepts?

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6 City Planning

Ray Spaxman

The most successful cities provide an environment which goes beyond efficiency and comfort. They are places which are inspirational; where the pride of the community is exhibited in the form and fabric of the city; where 'happiness' is as important as 'wealthiness'; where artists flourish as well as bankers.

A science and an art

City planning is both a science and an art. Although those who practice it must pursue sound and rational processes, it is such a complex subject, with so many unknowns, that the conclusions drawn will be dominated by the subjective or intuitive judgements of the thoughtful decision maker.

Today, there is seldom just one decision maker. Democratic processes ensure that decisions are made by communities of people operating through committees and elected councils. Because community values vary so much from place to place, the policies that emerge to guide change in the city will also vary. Community attitudes have a profound effect on the shape and operation of cities. Some cities are more concerned with the need for a sound economy; others concentrate on the physical infrastructure; and still others on social programmes. The U.S. system, leaning towards the rights and freedoms of the individual, and the

Canadian system, with a much greater emphasis on community, produce different urban environments.

Houston, famous for its rejection of community zoning regulations (at least until recently) is a very different city in form and function from a city like Toronto. Toronto has pursued community goals in controlling land uses, densities and the form of development. With its metropolitan form of government, Toronto in the 1960s was the North American prototype of separate municipalities finding a way to cooperate in the delivery of municipal services.

San Francisco, in the 1960s, was able to 'sell' the idea of the Bay Area Rapid Transit System (BART) to the electorate. It offered far-reaching opportunities for regional planning for the whole Bay area. Yet, twenty years later, these communities have been unable to agree on growth strategies, or on the organization of regional planning. They have been unable to coordinate buses with BART, or to concentrate development around transit stops.

Meanwhile Vancouver has a fully integrated system of buses, rail transit and ferries. In addition, regional planning policies concentrate growth into areas where there is greatest accessibility by public transit. The ability to operate within long-term community goals enables Vancouver to maximize the benefits from both private and public expenditures for the public good.

The entrepreneurial enthusiasm of individuals in the USA produces some magnificent monuments, but may downplay community values. Social programmes and the equitable distribution of resources seem to be given more emphasis in Canada. The cities that result are different. Only time will tell which ones remain most livable.

Everyone does it

Planning is a pursuit which is practised by everyone. In democratic systems, where open forms of government are followed and citizens are encouraged to be involved in the decision making processes, everyone can influence the way the city changes. At the most rudimentary level, through decisions we all make on a daily basis – how to get to work, what work to do, where to live, where to play, what to eat and so on – we create the changes that occur in the cities where we live. These 'market' forces provide valuable evidence when developing planning policies. However, planning needs to do more than accommodate market forces.

Leave free or intervene?

Increasingly, more people are becoming aware that it is the longer-term impacts of decisions which affect the livability of the city of the future.

Although the market can respond quickly to change, it does not anticipate the changes that work over the longer run. Decisions made on the basis of today's 'market' may overlook their longer range consequences. Similarly, the market is unlikely to take into account the broad impacts of individual policy decisions on other sectors of the economy. For many, it is not satisfactory to allow our cities to develop solely in response to the short-term entrepreneurial responses of individuals to market forces. Yet even an understanding of what might constitute the best actions to take today can only be achieved through community action. The participation of the broader community is needed to determine what sort of place it would like to create: for its own future and for future generations.

Bringing people together into groups, sharing their differences, seeking consensus and developing shared goals are among the more challenging parts of the city planning process. Those cities that have developed strong community bases for action are more able to broaden the understanding of community to include the whole urban area, or the whole region.

Such communities will be able to discover what is actually happening in the region; which things are desirable, or undesirable; what the community would like to become; what alternatives are available; and what actions can be taken to achieve the agreed vision.

Planners

Because the city is so complex, and its study and control have not yet become a marketable commodity, city planning has become an activity organized by public authorities and paid for through taxes. Governments arrange for experts to work on the issues and advise committees of citizens on what can be done. Some of us spend our whole time in that pursuit. We have become 'planners'.

Planning as the process

There are many definitions of planning. The dictionary says that planning is a way of doing something which has been worked out beforehand.

The first requirement of city planning is to find out what the city is about. This falls broadly under three headings: the physical, the social and the economic.

The most significant component is the place itself. It is important to know what is happening in the natural systems of the city location. For example, what are the natural drainage systems? What are the bearing capacities of the soils? Are the soils contaminated? What is the likelihood of flooding or earthquake? What are the seasonal precipitation rates and

temperatures? And, what has already been built there and what is its condition and future utility?

It is also important to know about the people who live there now and who might be living there in the future. How many are there? What ages are they? Are they increasing or decreasing in number? What social and political systems have they developed? What changes are they likely to seek in their city? It is the interaction between the people and the place which creates and changes the city.

It is important to know how the place survives economically. Where does the income come from that allows it to continue to develop and maintain or improve its livability? What resources or goods are exported or imported? And so on.

Then one has to find out what choices there are for the future, which ones are preferred by whom, and finally which future is preferred and what actions are needed to obtain that future.

While all this may seem obvious, it has been the absence of community concern about the impact of human beings on 'The Place' that has created the deterioration of the environment. It is only recently that we have begun to look at this seriously.

Bearing in mind that everything is changing continuously, whether by the action of the weather, the actions of the people who live in the city, or the actions of other communities or countries, understanding and anticipating change is the most difficult part of city planning.

The city as the product

Although many cities seem to have some things in common, cities are striking in the way they each have their own characteristics. By a combination of its own unique physical setting and the impact of the values of the people who affect it, a city emerges with its own distinctive personality. That personality affects us as residents or visitors, just as the personalities of individuals affect us. People are a product of their genes and environment; so are cities. Some may be happy or romantic places, others dull or oppressive. So, just as we hope that the people we meet will be good to be around, we similarly hope that the city we live in will be a good place to be. That is usually defined in words that suggest that it should be

SAFE HEALTHY FRIENDLY BEAUTIFUL and AFFORDABLE.

The city of Vancouver, following intensive polling of its citizens, adopted the following criteria against which it measures city management decisions:

The city should strive to be:-

PROSPEROUS	*VITAL*
EFFICIENT	*EQUITABLE*
BEAUTIFUL	*SECURE*
HEALTHY	*OPEN*

Different cities emphasize different values, but most people desire those laudable conditions.

Yet there is no city which can claim to have achieved all those conditions. Everything is relative. Vancouver may be considered more beautiful than Toronto, particularly if you come from Vancouver, yet there are some ugly parts in both cities. You may feel safer in Vancouver than Toronto, but in fact the crime rate in Toronto may be lower per capita than in Vancouver. Over time, some cities will become more significant than others in one area or another; and then, for complex reasons may decline in those areas. Certainly some cities have more amenities than others, some are safer, and some are more affordable.

The most successful cities seem to be those that provide an environment which goes beyond efficiency and comfort. They are places which are inspirational; where the pride of the community is exhibited in the form and fabric of the city; where 'happiness' is as important as 'wealthiness'; where artists flourish as well as bankers.

Organizing for planning

City planning has been going on in one form or another ever since people began to group together to form settlements. In its most elementary form it takes a planning decision to determine where the next house is to be built. Increasingly, the interplay on such matters between various interests and opinions led to various forms of organization that could make decisions and then see that they were implemented. In one type of organization decisions would be made by the most powerful person; in another, by a duly elected group of people representing the community.

We still operate under a combination of individual power and community power. While the mayor of a city may have the leadership role to make the planning decisions, he or she can only exercise that role while mayor. The mayor must obtain the support of most of those people who turn out at election time. Powerful individuals within the community affect decisions through various power bases. These include an ability to persuade through communications, through economic influence, or through intelligence, logic or political pressure.

It can be readily appreciated that city planning involves much more than an architectural, economics, social science, or engineering training can

provide. It involves a knowledge about everything that affects the city. It requires more understanding than one person can have. It therefore involves organizational, communicating and political processes designed to integrate the best available wisdom in the city community. Successful cities are those which are able 'to get it all together'.

The forces of change

What forces will be at play in the future that will impact the way we do planning? What sort of people, with what sort of values, will guide the planning? What sort of technological and environmental conditions will they have to confront? In what sort of environment will this future city planning take place ? The possibilities are numerous, and the following are only a few of the relevant considerations.

For many years the world population is likely to continue to grow. It will grow primarily in the developing regions of the world. Much of the growth will occur in existing urban areas. Phenomenal growth is already occurring in the cities of the developing world, where rural people are relocating because they see better chances for survival there. This 'hyper-urbanization' will continue, creating mammoth, hard-(if not impossible)-to-manage, megalopolises.

On the other hand, the developed world will experience natural population decline. This, combined with the desire of individual people to leave the developing world, will result in substantial movements of people between the continents. Most of that movement will be from developing to developed regions. People everywhere, becoming more mobile, will choose to live in those places which provide the best living conditions. These conditions include political and economic stability as well as decent and affordable living accommodation.

Although more people will be better educated, productivity may ensure that more people are better nourished, and more people will value democratic forms of government, the pressures from world population growth will continue to create 'have' and 'have-not' areas on the planet. The latter will continue to exert pressures on the former in an attempt to redistribute wealth more evenly, and they may be successful.

There will continue to be technological changes which would appear miraculous to 20th century people. These changes will create their own revolutions, following the previous agricultural, industrial, post-industrial and information revolutions. Such things as inhabited earth stations, solar-powered energy, new recyclable materials, robotics, genetic engineering, clean, safe and quiet mass transportation systems, all indicate unimaginable changes in the form, function and livability of our cities.

As communication and information systems continue to develop, there will be a coalescing of regions, (North America, Europe, Southeast Asia,

etc.) and the world community will become more influential. World government will become stronger. That government will ensure that the planet is treated with more respect than in the past. As a result, sustainable development economies will receive increasing support. Population growth will be managed more effectively. In North America, a higher proportion of healthy older people will lead to more sophisticated, cultured and compassionate actions. More people will be informed about their community and about their city. They will find ways of dealing with problems, such as shortages of housing and food, unacceptable levels of crime and unhealthy living conditions.

The planning processes in those times will be no less complicated than today. The issues to be addressed will be different and even more difficult than those we confront today. However, the ability of the people of that time to handle them will be vastly improved. They will be able to create cities which will be considered livable and fulfilling. We will mould the city and the city will mould us.

The future

What changes can we anticipate in city planning in response to these forces? In Canada we can anticipate continuing urban growth. We have vast habitable territories which can be developed to accommodate new or expanding settlements. However, little if anything is being done to anticipate those opportunities. Most of the growth now occurring around our cities is not compatible with future regional needs. Only recently have ecosystem considerations begun to appear in planning studies. Even simple livability criteria seem to have been ignored in the vast tracts of automobile-related, low density housing subdivisions spreading out from municipalities across Canada.

We are entering an era when the place we occupy will receive much more attention and respect than it has received in the past. It will no longer be acceptable to alter the natural environment without ensuring that the alteration is acceptable in the broader environmental context. Acceptability will be judged on sustainability criteria. Business and industry will have to justify their financial objectives by proving that their profit does not rely on losses to the environment or for other people, particularly future generations.

The public will insist that environmental matters are dealt with honestly. Sustainable development will be better understood, and new programs will emerge to guide urban development. City infrastructures will emphasize healthy environments, defined as pollution-free and accessible to everyone. This will mean:

- a greater mixture and diversity of land uses;

- more action to ensure accommodation for poorer people;
- good accessibility by foot and bicycle;
- continuing reliance on the private, but now clean, motor vehicle;
- a plentiful supply of planting and trees;
- a variety of park and recreation spaces;
- self-contained recycling processes within every community;
- distribution of land uses, and transportation and communication facilities, to maximize the convenience of public transportation, walking and cycling;
- more sophisticated participatory and cooperative planning processes, and more complex urban systems;
- more, easier-to-understand information about the city, improved urban education, and more opportunity to affect decisions;
- more emphasis on regional planning.

The last point will be particularly significant. There will be a continuing expansion of planning work, beyond its present concentration on individual municipal jurisdictions, to regional planning organizations. These organizations will be given greater decision making, financing and implementing authority. Regions will be considered as areas encompassing natural features such as river catchment areas, valley floors and uplands, and areas surrounding inlets and bays. Old administrative boundaries will be adjusted accordingly.

Municipal planning organizations will be strengthened in two directions. At the neighbourhood scale, local committees will be common, either elected or appointed by the urban council to advise on local matters. At the regional level, a combination of appointed people, (for their acknowledged skills), and elected people, (for their political representation and support, and accountability), will form the local government body. This body will run all community services, responding to the advice of the local community groups, and will determine what degree of authority can be delegated to the community councils. The protection of the ecosystem will predominate.

Technical planning will still involve the following sequence of activities:

1. Undertake initial surveys;
2. Sensitize everyone to the issues;
3. Formulate goals;
4. Prepare plans;

5. Implement the plans;
6. Repeat the process over time in order to keep plans relevant to changing conditions.

The process will become faster and more sophisticated, through continuing advancements in computer and communications technology. Model building of future alternatives will become normal practice. People will be able to manipulate the models to see the impact of their ideas on the future. It will be easier to inform people and to obtain their opinions about city issues. Information will be available from around the world about successful and unsuccessful urban programmes.

The city of the future

It is possible to imagine what cities might be like in the future, although any scenario which can be imagined could be quite wrong. They will still include dwelling units, parks, and access ways to allow people to move from place to place. However, it may not be necessary to travel to where other people are, in order to 'meet' them. The home communications and computer network may obviate the need to shop, or go to work. Changes in employment may eliminate the commuter rush hour, and totally alter the centre of towns as places predominated by workers. Separate industrial estates will become cleaner places, and may well be dispersed among other uses. But it is likely that the need to jostle and gather in groups and crowds will continue.

The impact of technological changes like those listed earlier will alter the shape and operation of cities. Some cities will concentrate on the latest 'high tech' solutions, maybe overlooking more human goals. The successful ones are likely to be those that find the way to balance innovation with history, and technology with livability.

7 Cities and Sustainable Development: Can Cities be Remodelled?

Gérard Divay

How can one interpret, from an urban perspective, a global term such as 'sustainable development'? How can one progress towards such a goal, in terms of debate, and preferably action, in a society which sometimes prefers catchprases?

Many perspectives are open to us.

Some preliminary analytical insights

It is tempting to take a neutral position, such as that of a dispassionate observer of society. In this respect, sustainable development may be a subject of great interest for analysis. Many aspects could be examined; the following are only a few of them.

1. Is it not true that the sustainable development concept is a demonstration of the working of the global village? Within less than five years, the preparation and publication of the Bruntland Report, *Our Common Future*, has created a consensus among many leaders on all continents. It has coined, and brought into the limelight, the expression 'sustainable development', a symbolic phrase that evokes and mobilizes in the same manner as other slogans, such as Roosevelt's 'New Deal', and J.F. Kennedy's 'Before the end of the decade we will land men on the moon.'

In Canada, not a day has passed without this expression being uttered, printed or reported on. With the new found popularity of sustainable development, we recognize ourselves as earthlings living in a global village. But then, why the attraction? Why this fascination? Is sustainable development the signal that initiates greater changes? Or is it an incantation, a collective one at that, through which we hope to escape a planetary tragedy without changing course or trajectory? There are many paradoxes.

This notion of sustainable development rallies leaders of many realms of wealth and poverty, but slightly more from the more opulent societies. Whether it is a formula for planetary socioeconomic change, or only represents a hypocritical belief in cheap salvation, sustainable development rallies a number of actors and different strategies.

Be it written or spoken, one sometimes gets the impression that a simple change in terminology will bring nature to erase, all at once, our mistakes.

Is sustainable development then only an intellectual fashion, or is it a new ideology, a societal movement which mobilizes the more enlightened leaders of our world?

2. Is the ideology of sustainable development, in fact, really new? Looking at it closely, its novelty is not obvious. One easily finds clues in the previous three decades, such as the 'growth versus development' debate, and the redistribution of wealth of the 1960s, or in the precise themes of the 1970s such as the conserver society, the wellbeing versus standard of living argument, quality of life, and the oil crisis and economics of energy. Similarly, the 1980s brought their own preoccupations, including the theme of the deteriorating quality of the environment.

The impact and the attraction of sustainable development may lie in the fact that it seems to synthezise and encompass, more or less explicitly, those preoccupations, and to carry within itself the most generous aspirations of the past thirty years. But then: have we really learned that much from different experiences, in translating these ideas into real world socioeconomic models or programmes?

3. Why is it that sustainable development has been used most often in reference to natural resources management, in the industrial field, and in the field of production technologies, whereas it has rarely been used in reference to the urban domain? Is it because our cities are already models of sustainable development? Scarcely. But if one looks at durability, there is no human endeavour more durable than cities. Existing cities that have evolved from antiquity are witnesses to this fact.

It might even be argued that some cities are models of a society that espouses sustainable development because they thrive on being service

centres, in contrast to the extraction of resources, a much more pollutant and predatory practice.

This argument is often used by those who feel that economic structural trends will take us directly into a post-industrial way of life that is attuned to sustainable development. That may be true only if we disconnect the city from its hinterland and from the environment on which it relies.

An action perspective

Let me now expand on the theme of sustainable development and the city, from the vantage point of an urban actor, a position closer to my actual professional role. Many questions can be put forward from this perspective.

- Why should we espouse sustainable development? The case for doing so has been advanced and analyzed very frequently and need not be repeated here.

- But what is sustainable development in the urban context? There are two possible answers, one largely theoretical, the other owing more to the realm of fiction.

In a theoretical approach, one would need to articulate this new paradigm in terms of the dialectical relationship between society/economy and the environment. The exercise is no doubt of interest, but would be time-consuming for our present purpose.

In a fictional approach, one could attempt to sketch a utopian image of a sustainably developing city. Utopias can be of help in changing values and attitudes. Our example must separate itself from two opposing models: the 19th century utopia of a small industrial city in a rural setting (the 'garden city'), and the city of contemporary science-fiction, orbiting the earth in space.

Though distinct from these models, the image of a sustainable development city must assume some of their better characteristics: the organic integration with nature of the 19th century model, linked to the self-sufficiency of the space station.

I want to focus on the core questions: How can individual cities, and the urban system as a whole, grow and thrive in a sustainable way? How can we bridge the gap between our present self-destroying practices and sustainable development? I can only address these questions from my professional position in the Canadian urban context, and more precisely within the Quebec experience.

The need for criteria

A precise definition of the final objective is not a necessity, for the most successful urban environments have not all been comprehensively planned. But we do need criteria to ensure that we are progressing towards the right goal, which is sustainable development. These criteria must be comprehensive, so that we do not neglect some of the many elements that make up sustainable development. They must also be demanding, since change is implicit in sustainable development. Initially, five criteria can be considered:

(a) *An active population.* Contrary to the usual presentation of sustainable development, which emphasizes the maintenance of natural processes, let us talk of the wellbeing of the human species. The first criterion is therefore an active population in every sense of the word. In a sustainable city, every citizen able to work occupies a job, and by so doing is part of the productive process. At the planetary scale, poverty generates enormous pressures on the sustainability of natural resources. Similarly, in developed cities, poverty fuels pressures on the quality of the built environment, and denies the equity principle inherent in sustainable development.

But an active population is characterized not only by employment but also by involvement in socio-cultural and political processes. An active population is a creative and empowered one.

(b) *An environment that is free of toxics.* Sustainable development implies that there is neither production nor accumulation of non-degradable waste. Sewage and storm water would be recirculated to the environment at a quality compatible with aquatic life. Emissions would also be minimized, and compensatory measures would be taken in a manner compatible with the vision of the city as a spaceship.

(c) *In balance with natural elements.* The traditional urban environment allows for natural elements, such as vegetation especially for its aesthetic value, or water for use in washing away silt or for public fountains. As for wildlife, the only species tolerated are the friendly species.

In a sustainable mode, the urban environment would not merely tolerate natural elements, it would evolve around them, respecting their survival requirements. The city would take advantage of the capacity of these natural elements to condition the atmosphere and the aesthetic and visual quality of the landscape. It would benefit from their propensity for diversity. Urbanization in a sustainable development mode would not involve any net loss in natural productivity, since any loss of productivity due to urbanization of lands and shorelines would be mitigated by the

implementation of measures to increase the productivity of residual lands within the territory of the city and at its periphery.

(d) *Efficient use of natural resources.* In contrast to our actual cities, a sustainable development city would be thrifty on resource consumption. Water consumption would be minimal. Garbage would be recycled and energy used sparingly.

(e) *Diversity of environments.* Nature relies heavily on diversity of habitat and genetic stock for its survival and wealth. In terms of their inhabitants, cities have a long tradition of intermixture which has produced cultural dynamism. In terms of natural habitats, however, this tradition has not been so normal or successful.

The preceding criteria are by no means exhaustive. They apply not merely to the city itself and to the built environment, but more globally to the larger hinterland (sometimes international in its dimensions) which provides resources and is often used by the city for pollution disposal.

In light of these criteria, it is easy to review the physical framework and the multiple activities of the present day city, and it is easy to perceive that a move towards sustainable development implies major transformations in our present towns and cities.

Major transformations

Some examples of the changes that will be needed can be simply stated.

Although new manufacturing plants may be able to manage their wastes, major efforts will have to be made by older plants to adopt new production technologies that will modify their production processes to meet zero pollution levels, a basic requirement of sustainable development. Older industrial areas will have to be decontaminated.

In the consumer market, the present trend towards recycling and re-use will increase, and products will have to go through significant transformations, not only in packaging but also in their production and composition.

Buildings will also have to be modified in many respects, for energy conservation and, more important, for reasons of indoor air quality. Building products that leak toxic fumes, or electrical systems that induce magnetic fields, will have to be modified, replaced or completely redesigned. The need for these changes will create an important dilemma between the economy of reconstruction versus the desire to conserve existing structures.

The implementation of sustainable development in the urban environment will certainly influence the structure and form of our human

settlements, and we will have to adopt new methods and practices. Integration of natural elements, better spatial allocation of population and activities and attainment of socioeconomic equilibrium are only a few of the goals to be reached, but it would be presumptuous to try to indicate which new forms or structures will emerge. A unique universal pattern is unlikely; by definition, sustainable development presupposes a distinctive symbiosis between habitats, topography, climate and geophysical elements of different regions.

The fate of the 'bungalow suburbs', symbols of an ever-expanding urbanization, is dubious. Some could disappear and the others will have to invent a more harmonious link with nature, discarding the obsession for lawns and swimming pools.

Reliance on the automobile, an important element of our urban way of life, will have to be rethought, for the urban dweller is an incredible nomad and polluter. In a sustainable city, patterns and means of transportation will have to be revised. It is unlikely that everyone will become sedentary. In the next decade, the age of telecommunications, more and more people will work and live in their home environment, but surely not a majority. What is needed is not the death of the nomads but mainly a change in the way they accomplish their daily migration: the reliance on the automobile.

Doing away with this reliance will be incredibly difficult for the individual, but also for society. Independently of coercive measures, society will have to provide new or improved means of transport, and link them more tightly to the form of development or redevelopment in certain areas. This is a basic prerequisite if we are to break the vicious circle of more cars, less users for mass transit, a deteriorating mass transit system, and still more cars.

This short presentation of the transformations that are prerequisites for sustainable development in the urban environment may seem overwhelming and induce scepticism, but they appear inevitable if we are to be successful. The question is not what they will be, but how fast can we act?

Accelerating incremental changes

In reality, such modifications can only occur in an incremental manner. If we look at the pace of transformations in a slow-growing urban environment such as Montreal, it is doubtful that their rhythm can match the urgency needed to implement sustainable development as envisaged by the Bruntland Report. For example, given the urgency to save the ozone layer, it is doubtful that, within a decade, we can replace all the equipment used for cooling, refrigeration, and air conditioning that we find in industrial plants, warehouses, commercial outlets, houses and even cars, if we rely only on the normal replacement rate. It is the same for

the replacement and redesign of the housing stock, given the rhythm of renovation and construction.

Keeping the same slow incremental approach in the urban environment, while seeking a rapid change towards sustainable development, is similar to attempting to escape a head-on collision without changing trajectory. There is only one conclusion possible: we must accelerate the rhythm of change of the urban environment.

Is this feasible? The answer is surely yes. In the past, societies have responded to similar challenges, whether by landing men on the moon or by reconstruction following World War II. The Bruntland Report has not yet found its Marshall Plan, but there is room for optimism. How can we accelerate?

Process orientation

The needed ingredients for a successful societal move ahead are known, and they could be reactivated in this mutation towards sustainable development. What we require are enlightened stewardship, the opening of new markets and, most important, local initiatives.

Public stewardship

In the urban realm, public involvement and commitment normally proceed through bylaws, and a move towards sustainable development and its implementation would necessitate modification of a number of bylaws as they relate to the urban practice. A move towards innovative performance-oriented bylaws could be consistent with criteria for sustainability, such as zero toxicity and balanced natural elements. It can be noted in passing that such criteria are offshoots of old town planning preoccupations, such as the right to clean air and the right to sunlight. Furthermore, new preoccupations have started to come into focus, such as the need for a new set of standards and bylaws that will minimize damages in case of technological accidents.

If there is to be any chance of success in implementing sustainability, planning bylaws will have to evolve towards both stringency and innovation. This result can only be reached if the major players on the urban scene are given a multi-year program, permitting the implementation of an urban form by planners and developers which will better correspond to sustainability criteria. This leeway will also allow sufficient time for the end-user, the citizen, to adopt a new way of thought and way of life.

But we should not rely totally on changes in bylaws. We need more active means, especially if we are to revise and optimize market structures, for the transformations that we have explored will only bear fruit when the economic agents have fully grasped the opportunities offered to them.

New market opportunities

The accelerated development of new building materials and technologies, and of new household appliances, could mean new life for a manufacturing sector that reached a plateau some time ago, and it could mean new market opportunities. The diversification and fragmentation of the residential market place, combined with an evolution of the behaviour of buyers and renters, favors innovations and diversification of building types and urban developments.

Public authorities can play an important role in the creation of new markets simply by putting forward a global, all-encompassing vision and by striving towards cooperation. Also, and most importantly, at the level of the urban dynamic, public bodies will have to be vigilant and imaginative in their search for sustainability, to prevent unduly increasing land values, for there is an inherent incompatibility between sustainable development and sprawl, especially sprawl on prime agricultural land. In stopping the invasion of the hinterland, public authorities will have to make inner city vacant lots available to developers. They will need to look at the redevelopment of low-rise, low density post-1945 development which offers locational potential but lacks environmental performance.

All these transformations in the urban web presuppose tremendous reinvestment and recapitalization in urban infrastructure. The design of this infrastructure must also be altered. Fortunately, due to the life cycle of major infrastructures, in many urban areas this reinvestment has to be done anyway. That creates an opportunity for new practice. Of course, this investment has to be financed, but the economic activity coming from new markets and private urban renewal could provide a major part of the financing.

The implementation of sustainable development in cities would entail sweeping urban renewal and retrofitting. However, compared to the urban renewal of the 1960s, the approach would be very different: grassroot initiatives in a high-tech context instead of a bulldozer approach.

In order to redirect public stewardship and to create new markets for more environmentally friendly equipment, sustainable development must not be merely a catchprase. It must represent a genuinely new culture, a set of values and behaviour rules, internalized by leaders and population. As a culture, sustainable development could prompt public agencies, community groups and private firms to numerous local initiatives. Sustainable development involves radical and sweeping changes that cannot be precisely planned. Our common future signifies, primarily, a common direction.

In Canada, we observe more initiatives at local levels than at provincial or federal levels. For example, the city of Montreal has already registered more than one hundred environmental projects, in its thrust towards

sustainable development. At the neighbourhood level, especially in poor communities, new local agencies have been put in place to stimulate job creation, and their projects are supported by an emerging coalition of business people and social workers.

Planners as strategists

To end, let me say some words on the impact of these changes on the planner's role. Urban planners ought to be a relevant input in this collective mobilization. Aren't they the 'specialists' in assessing and shaping long term effects? To meet this expectation, they will have to enlarge and review their vision, their knowledge and their practice, so as to be more concerned with the social dimensions and environmental impacts of urban choices.

Urban planners are prone to link economic growth and spatial form. As the paradigm of development changes, the link between land and development has to be rethought. The social utility of urban planners will depend less on their ability to draft conventional plans and more on their power to establish new coalitions of leaders eager to promote sustainable development. Important also will be their ability to provide facts, analysis and concrete solutions which can lure large audiences in the sustainability thrust. Maybe more than other professionals, they will have to abide by the conservation motto: think globally, act locally.

Further reading

Canadian Council of Resource and Environment Ministers (1987), *Report of the National Task Force on Environment and Economy*, CCREM, Toronto.

City of Montreal (1990), *Le Répertoire des initiatives environnementales*, Service de la planification et de la concertation, Montreal.

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8 Potable Water, Sewage and Waste Disposal Issues

William Emery

Introduction

'Sustainable development', as defined by the Brundtland Commission, is 'development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs' (Brundtland Commission, 1987).

This paper investigates the implications of this concept with particular reference to the provision of water services to communities. The environmental and economic principles of sustainable development are briefly restated, in order to provide a background to an analysis of their impact on the water cycle and its exploitation by man.

The water cycle can be viewed as a near-perfect renewable resource which is now subject to a variety of threats to its assimilative capacity. These threats are delineated as a series of pollution interfaces.

Pollution is a necessary evil. The water environment can accommodate a level of pollutants without impairing its long term ability to renew itself. It is important for the sustained development of communities to find the correct balance between pollutant inputs, the costs of reducing wastes to this level, and the assimilative capacity of the water cycle. Striving for zero pollution is likely to be both impractical and prohibitively expensive.

Two major challenges are identified. These challenges are not technological: we know how to provide a sustainable water environment. The challenges are political. Consumers, civil servants, politicians and managers need to understand the very considerable costs that it will take

to achieve the goals required. Realistic long-term arrangements and institutions need to be established to ensure that the necessary finance is made available and that the objectives are achieved in practice.

The second challenge is to set up and enforce controls on the use of environmentally damaging materials in industry and agriculture. These can be regulatory or through fiscal policy.

Politicians will need to confront strongly entrenched pressure groups, with considerable economic or publicity influence, if this is to be achieved.

Sustainable development

How should we treat natural environments so that they can play their part in sustaining the economy as a source of improved standard of living for all? Environmental economists (Pearce and Turner, 1990) suggest two primary rules:

1. Always use renewable resources in such a way that the rate of use is not greater than the natural regeneration rate.

2. Always keep waste flows to the environment at or below the assimilative capacity of the environment.

These basic rules imply that the resource stock should be held constant over time. Two secondary rules allow for substitution and increases in efficiency in the use of resources:

3. Ensure that, as exhaustible resources are deleted, their reduced stock is compensated for by increases in renewable resources.

4. Recognize that a given standard of living can be ensured from a reducing stock of resources, if technological advances lead to improvements in the efficiency of use.

Within the borders of an industrialized nation such as the UK or Canada, one could perhaps begin to feel relatively secure that current economic growth can be sustained indefinitely. Just leave it to scientists, technologists and engineers to come up with replacement resources and, together with business, to ensure a more efficient means of using existing ones.

But of course it is not as simple as that. From an environmental point of view the ultimate unit is our fragile planet. What is done or used in one country does affect the world balance. Though such actions may each appear as 'a drop in the ocean', the aggregated effect of these small drops is only now being realized.

On the demand side, there will be increasing pressure for economic development, and a fairer division of existing resources from the developed countries to underdeveloped, developing and newly industrialized nations. To this balancing act must also be added the ever-increasing world population. Every year ninety million people are added to the total, i.e more than the combined population of Canada and the UK (UK Government 1990). There can be no cause for complacency or delay in moving towards an environmentally sustainable economy in the global sense.

In the long term, the improvements necessary to maintain a sustainable environment will have to carried out. In the short and medium terms, limited financial resources and conflicting needs for those resources infer a need for discounted environmental cost/benefit analysis. Environmental economists recommend that efforts be concentrated on:

- improving valuation techniques, including valuing future costs and benefits carefully;
- integrating environmental considerations into all economic decisions; and
- incorporating a sustainability constraint in the appraisal of environmental programmes (Pearce et al., 1989).

The sustainability constraint should be an absolute requirement for all programmes impacting on the water environment. Choices based on cost/benefit considerations would be restricted to non-essential and discretionary objectives.

It is generally accepted that the costs of restoring the environmental balance should follow the principle that the 'polluter pays'(PPP). In practice the implementation of this principle is difficult and progress in this area has been slow. Perversely, the PPP can be a real and unnecessary barrier to pollution reduction due to the difficulties in developing mechanisms and devices to make it acceptable in practice. The question reduces to whether we stand by the principle, or do we improve the environment. The answer may be different for the sustainability criteria than for the non-essential and discretionary objectives.

The 'water cycle' and pollution interfaces

A. The 'water cycle'

The water cycle has the appearance of an apparently ever-renewable asset both as a life-support system and as a means of economic and social

progress. The cycle is fuelled by natural energy processes, and the likelihood of the source material becoming depleted may appear very remote.

The water cycle resource volume is held in permeable underground strata (groundwater), rivers, lakes and oceans (surface water) and in the earth's atmosphere. Continuous evaporation from the surface provides the means of redistribution, and precipitation falling on the earth's surface completes the cycle.

Water is not a depleting resource comparable to other naturally occurring resources such as coal, gas, oil, minerals etc. It is a really a vehicle which, due to its chemical and physical characteristics, aids innumerable processes in the natural and industrial environments.

There does not appear to be any major problem in using this resource so as to comply with our basic rules.

The water cycle was not thought to be under threat until quite recently. The scale of the resource was considered to be so large that its overall capacity to accept and deal with waste flows was not in doubt. Severe deterioration of the local water was discounted as industry and people moved to adjacent unpolluted areas. The extent of this mistaken view is now accepted, and the threats to this natural balance can be argued to lie at man's door.

Abstractions from the water cycle for human use in industry, agriculture and public water supply make use of the solvent and other properties of water, which inevitably contributes to a deterioration of its purity and a reduction in its effectiveness to sustain life.

The major pollution interfaces which demonstrate the impact of modern industrialized man on the environmental balance of the hydrological cycle are summarized in the following section. Five separate interfaces are examined; agricultural pollution; industrial pollution; municipal waste water pollution and marine pollution. The order in which they are identified has been based on their position in the cycle rather than their environmental significance.

B. The agricultural pollution interface.

The progressive and deleterious effect of intensive farming on the water cycle can be demonstrated by two examples:

1. *Farm waste.* Farm waste pollution can affect the quality of groundwater, but in most circumstances the problems impact directly on the watercourses. Undiluted farm slurry is over eighty times more polluting than human raw sewage and silage liquor is 200 times more polluting than untreated sewage. The National Rivers Authority (NRA), the UK Government's river environmental regulator, has recently stated that the amount of untreated animal effluent going on the land at least equals the

quantity of human effluent that is substantially treated in sewage treatment works. In most circumstances this will not be of concern since it represents organic recycling with a natural fertilizer; however intensive husbandry techniques can move this into the pollution area (Crickhowell, 1990).

In 1988 half of all serious water pollution incidents reported in the UK were caused by pollution from farms. Surveys by the National Rivers Authority indicate that the scale of agricultural pollution is more widespread than the number of incidents suggests.

2. *Fertilizer and pesticide application.* It is doubtful whether modern agricultural practices could be maintained without the use of some fertilizers to promote high growth and yields. Similarly pesticides are argued to be an essential part of intensive food production. These chemicals are absorbed into the soil water and slowly percolate into groundwater and river systems.

The extent of the release of natural and chemical fertilizers and pesticides into the soil water depends on many factors. There is evidence that some farming practices and growing different crops can add to the contamination of the water cycle. For example the ploughing of grasslands increases the leaching of polluting materials in surface run-off. It may take a long time (several years) for surface pollutants to reach the water table, so today's levels probably reflect several decades of past activity and controlling the application of these chemicals and leaching now will not remove the short term need to treat the symptoms.

The deteriorating quality of groundwater represents a serious public water supply problem in parts of the UK. The options to solve the problems vary from diluting the polluted groundwater with other purer supplies to achieve acceptable water quality to the construction of water treatment plants to remove the pollutants to acceptable levels. In the worst cases the only option would be to abandon the source and leave it contaminated for future generations.

The pollution of surface waters and rivers with these chemical cocktails could have unfortunate environmental effects. The possibility of triggering long term genetic change on numerous water-using species cannot be ruled out.

Some of these problems are reasonably well understood. To reduce them to acceptable levels will require coordinated action on a wide number of fronts, for example: educating the farming community in pollution control techniques; improving storage and treatment facilities; introduction of special groundwater protection zones; and more rigorous monitoring and policing of the water environment. The NRA has called for a national strategy for agricultural waste management to ensure a steady reduction in pollutant load to the water environment. There is an urgent need for such a strategy, and its implementation will probably

involve rigorous regulation and control. The likelihood that the objectives can be achieved by consensus appears remote.

C. The industrial and manufacturing pollution interface

A significant proportion of the abstractions from the water cycle (either directly for the water cycle or indirectly from the public water supply infrastructure) are to facilitate industrial and manufacturing processes. The used water then makes its way back into the cycle via industrial discharges to sewers, watercourses, lakes or seas. There has been serious concern about the pollution of the water cycle from these discharges for at least twentyfive years, and the examples of early gross industrial pollution are legion.

Increasingly the discharge of industrial wastes to sewers and the riverine environment is being much more rigorously controlled and regulated, using differing forms of discharge consents. In the UK potentially harmful substances have been identified in a 'Red List'. This schedules about 24 groups of substances. There is agreement that these materials are dangerous to the environment on the following criteria: toxicity, persistence, bioaccumulation, physico-chemical properties and production levels (and carcinogenicity).

The other significant pollution interface concerns the leaching of water borne wastes from landfill waste tips. This contamination reaches both the ground water and riverine elements of the water cycle. Proper management of these tips is vital to control and minimize this source of pollution of the water cycle. The problem applies to all landfill sites, whether they are for industrial or municipal waste.

D. Municipal sewage pollution interface

In England and Wales 96 per cent of properties are connected to the sewerage system, the highest proportion in Europe. 83 per cent of all sewage is treated at one of 6,500 treatment works.

The urban waterborne sewerage system and associated treatment facilities provides two further pollution interfaces:

1. *Sewer discharges.* Urban run-off, transported via surface water sewers directly into the rivers, may not be so grossly polluted as the foul sewage but still can be a serious and persistent hazard to the environment.

The limited capacity of most combined sewerage systems requires the construction of storm and emergency overflows as essential safety valves on the infrastructure. The intermittent nature of their operation renders assessment of the effects of this direct discharge of diluted sewage to the watercourses difficult. Each one is a potential source of a polluting discharge. A survey in 1989 identified 14,210 consented storm overflows

in England and Wales and inferred that not all of them had been identified. Considerable investment programmes have ongoing in the UK for several years to reduce the problems of environmental pollution and flooding of premises. In the UK there is extensive use of strategic drainage areas plans, bringing together information on the condition and hydraulic capacity of the sewerage system with detailed modelling of optimum environmental and economic solutions. These usually involve: interceptor sewers to divert overflows to treatment works; the construction of tank sewers storage systems to avoid discharges in all but exceptional storm conditions; better designed overflows to retain gross solids in the sewers; and, where practical, the separation of the sewerage system.

A further sewer related pollution interface is highway drains which discharge directly into the rivers. Road run-off can contain significant pollutants, for example salts used for de-icing and fuel/oil washes.

2. *Sewage treatment works discharges.* The discharge of effluent from municipal sewage treatment works represents the single biggest source of persistent pollution of the riverine environment. Municipal sewage treatment works are a necessary evil in environmental terms, and the environmental and economic operation of these facilities is crucial to the sustainable development of communities. Investment in properly designed works and the efficient management of these works can provide the key to improving the river environment and substantially reducing the pollution load in the water cycle.

Historically the discharge consents (statutory licences to discharge an effluent to a watercourse, normally with upper bound limits on level of suspended solids, biological oxygen demand and flow) at sewage treatment works in the UK have been based on what the existing works can do rather than on a full environmental assessment of the assimilative capacity of the river. The cost of providing a sewage treatment facility has tended to be the overriding consideration when selecting a suitable design. Delays in extending works to accommodate increasing pollution loads led to 23 per cent of works failing to meet their consent levels in 1988 (17 per cent in 1989). A major investment programme to upgrade sewage treatment works to enable them to comply with their discharge consents is ongoing in the UK. The programme is due to be completed in April 1992.

E. Marine pollution interface

The major lakes, seas and oceans have provided a conveniently large bin for man's waste products. As the end point of the water cycle, the seas receive the accumulated pollutants that enter the river systems by any of the previous interfaces. The seas also receive directly additional pollution loading from a number of other sources.

In the UK approximately 14 per cent of the sewered population are connected to sea outfalls which discharge crude or partially treated sewage into coastal waters. This represents a considerable pollution load, which the UK government is seeking to reduce by requiring treatment of all major direct discharges to coastal waters.

The sea has provided a convenient dumping ground for sewage sludge, industrial waste and estuarine dredgings. For example, in 1988 approximately 25 per cent of the total sewage sludge production in England and Wales was disposed of at sea (232,000 tonnes dry solids) and in the same year the UK dumped 2.3 million tonnes of industrial waste. The UK government has implemented a policy to stop this mode of disposal from 1998.

The marine environment is very complex and safeguarding it requires international cooperation and action.

Each of the pollution interfaces identified above presents decision makers with problems to resolve, some more urgent than others. Economic solutions to these problems are not assisted by the scale and complexity of the water cycle and the numerous threats being placed on its capacity to assimilate the gross waste flows and regenerate itself. Regeneration is essential to support the sustained development of communities.

Political decisions on control

A. Technological barriers?

Over the last century or so man has constructed and maintained a relatively complex infrastructure systems. This system abstracts, stores and treats the water to the requisite standards; transports it to points of use; collects the used product and its associated pollutant loads; transports this waste water to treatment facilities; and then discharges the effluent back into the water cycle.

In general the processes used in the water industry are relatively simple, with no insuperable technological problems. The operational, engineering and scientific effort is directed at providing an effective continuous service, at an acceptable cost to those financing the business.

B. Financial barriers?

This lack of technological barriers to a sustainable hydrological environment removes one reason for delay from political decision makers. The real constraints are in financing the necessary asset renewal and environmental improvement programmes, and accepting the short term consequences for the local and national economy.

The primary questions facing those who control the water cycle as political decision makers or managers or users are:

- how to determine the assimilative capacity of the water cycle, locally, regionally and nationally;
- how to monitor the state of the cycle;
- how to decide what action is needed to restore and sustain the cycle; and
- how to ensure that this action is optimal in both economic and environmental terms.

To resolve these questions requires a substantial amount of sound accurate information, marginal cost information and the use of proven cost/benefit procedures. These could be used to agree the appropriate strategy for each catchment. The strategy should address both the short and long term objectives and provide for incremental progress towards the achievement and subsequent maintenance of a sustainable water environment. None of this should present technical problems or substantial cost. When these questions are resolved, however, the key questions arise:

- how to finance the necessary work?
- who should pay for it?
- can the community afford it now?

The answers to these questions are essentially political.

During the last twenty years successive UK governments have adopted a 'stop-go' policy on water finance which has not been conducive to the long term investment strategies needed to achieve a sustainable water environment. Where financial resources have been made available, progress has been substantial.

C. The customer viewpoint

The views of the water customers are important. Additional short term costs will have to borne either directly through charges or indirectly through taxation or increased prices of other goods. The willingness of customers to bear these increased costs will dictate what is or is not possible in the short term.

A recent opinion poll in the UK confirmed that the public are extremely concerned about environmental problems. They want

governments to do more to solve such problems, but are less enthusiastic about the suggestion of paying more. The majority of people thought that the government is not doing a good job in protecting the environment. The public expressed a desire for stricter controls on such things as water quality, disposal of industrial waste, and the use of agricultural chemicals and pesticides. The poll showed that concerns about the environment had led to changes in behaviour in an attempt to protect the environment (*The Guardian*, 14 September 1990).

D. The way forward?

Political decision makers and those responsible for managing and regulating the industry will have to convince the paying public, and the wider community of nations, of the need for short and medium term improvement programmes. This will need broad public discussion to create widespread recognition of the problems and the solutions.

As well as facilitating the collection of information and research, and orchestrating the above discussions, the political decision makers should ensure that the administrative, regulatory and fiscal regimes provide incentives to assist the process of achieving sustainable development.

Managers of the water service industries should ensure that their action programmes are justifiable in economic terms, accepting the sustainability constraint as an absolute requirement. It is important that charging policies provide customers with the proper incentives to act in ways consistent with the objectives of sustainable development.

Recent developments in the macro-management of the water cycle

A. International developments

The following global trends are evident in the macro-management of the water cycle:

- A move towards reduced direct government intervention in society, both in a financial and regulatory sense.

- A move towards policy integration, particularly towards forms of integrated pollution control, combined with a growing recognition of the need for increased cost-effectiveness of control.

- A gradual transition away from end-of-pipe pollution abatement to preventive measures such as process control, and a greater emphasis on the precautionary (anticipatory) approach.

There are two basic approaches to the problem of reducing the pollution loads to the regenerative capacity of the water cycle.

1. Uniform emission standards for all polluting inputs, based on a precautionary approach to potentially hazardous substances.

   Pro: very simple to understand and imposes a common requirement on all polluting inputs.

   Con: high costs, which it is doubtful could be defended on economic or environmental grounds for other than toxic pollutants.

2. Limits set according to the receiving capacity of each water body and related environmental quality objectives.

   Pro: in theory should provide the optimal economic solution.

   Con: requires accurate and contemporary information and a detailed understanding the river catchments, together with marginal costs and waste reduction relationships for each polluting source.

The solution to the problems of achieving a sustainable water environment probably lies in combining elements of both systems.

Some countries are considering new types of economic instruments which build on the basic philosophy that the polluter must pay for the necessary clean up, to ensure that waste products are not detrimental to the environment or would prevent sustainable development of the community.

B. The UK approach: pollution control

In the UK a combined approach to pollution control is being pursued. This has three elements: setting statutory river water quality objectives; development of a more coherent management and monitoring régime for discharges to watercourses; and integrated pollution control of complex industrial processes.

Any inherent conflicts in the three elements are resolved by requiring the use of the 'Best Practical Environmental Option' – the outcome of a systematic consultative and decision-making procedure which emphasises the protection and conservation of the environment across land, air and water. For a given set of objectives, the option chosen provides the most

benefit or least damage to the environment as a whole, at acceptable cost, in the long term as well as the short term.

The problems in this approach are that there is no formal methodology or guidance on how risks and benefits in different environmental media might be compared during an option appraisal and, of course, the solutions hinge on what objectives have been set. The success of the strategy will depend on a willingness to finance the selected options.

C. The UK approach – public or private sector

Whether to provide water services within the public (or municipal) sector or within the private sector represents one of the major underlying issues for those involved in the industry at all levels. The arguments one way or the other hinge in most part on political philosophy and can be summarized in very simple and provocative terms as:

- The public sector rationale places the need for accountability for decisions on these vital services to the community to reside with politicians and the local community itself. The ethos of public service will provide the necessary stimulus to maintain effective and efficient provision of the service.

- The private sector rationale dismisses the accountability argument on the basis of the community being able to have a more efficient service when those managing and operating the service have the flexibility and stimulus of the private sector. In essential services a rigorous regulatory regime will provide the necessary backstop to prevent exploitation of the local monopoly positions that such private companies could abuse.

In the UK there has been a significant running down of the water service asset base. The need to invest heavily to restore the operating capability of the service to current quality standards represents a substantial procurement challenge for the UK water industry. This 'catching up' investment programme is significant in national terms and totals £25 billion over the next ten years (OFWAT, 1990).

The UK government recognized this financial requirement, and in November 1989 privatized the water industry to facilitate the successful completion of these major investment programmes. The privatization of the industry allows the companies to raise finance from the market, and facilitates the completion of current and future investment programmes to meet environmental obligations as and when they occur. The need to finance the major investment programmes that all the service providers required tipped the balance to the private sector approach and the

removal of the industry from the constraints of the 'public sector borrowing requirement'.

Conclusions

All parts of the water cycle are under considerable threat from excessive man-made pollution. There is an urgent need to tackle the problems that this has generated if we are not going to jeopardize the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Economic development of communities cannot be sustained without abstracting from the water cycle, and using the regenerative capacity of the cycle to assist in the disposal of waste. Polluting discharges to the water environment are a necessary evil which require investment, management and operational expertise and control mechanisms to ensure that the assimilative capacity of the resource is not exceeded.

Achieving the objective is not constrained by a lack of technology. It is well known how to provide a sustainable water environment.

The constraints on moving towards this objective are political. Communities will have to invest significant proportions of their economic wealth to achieve the goals required. It will require considerable skills by politicians, civil servants and managers to create widespread recognition of the problems and the need for the solutions. It is yet to be demonstrated that communities are willing to pay the costs involved. Decision makers must win the argument and gain acceptance of the financial implications before further damage to the environment takes the costs of remedial action to even higher levels.

Long-term arrangements and institutions will have to be set up to facilitate the provision of the necessary finance, and to ensure that the objectives are achieved. Governments will need to establish and enforce controls on the use of environmentally damaging materials in industry and agriculture. This can be by using regulatory controls and/or through fiscal policy.

In all parts of this integrated strategy, decision makers will need to successfully confront strongly entrenched pressure groups from all sides of the environmental spectrum. Powerful agricultural, industrial and manufacturing interests may be reluctant to forego profits to pay for the necessary action, or to accept constraints on their activities. 'Green' pressure groups may want to achieve far more than a sustainable water environment, since they are likely to place a lower threshold on the assimilative capacity of watercourses. Can communities afford the luxury of a completely unpolluted water environment and sustained economic development? It is unlikely. The solution will be a trade-off between discretionary environmental benefits and their costs.

One thing is certain. There can be no trade-off when it comes to the investment needed to achieve a stable water environment in which the

polluting loads do not exceed the capacity of the cycle to deal with them. Not to invest will risk the sustained development of society.

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9 The New Responsibilities of Local Government in Britain

Rodney Brooke

Introduction

UK Government distaste for the bureaucracy of the welfare state has been intensified over the last decade. The Government has been antagonized by local authorities whose politics lie at the other end of the political spectrum, and by its own inability to control local authority spending. Government philosophy has led to the imposition of market-based solutions, or where necessary the introduction of a simulated internal market. It led to the removal of powers from local authorities. It led to the abolition of conurbation-wide strategic metropolitan authorities like the Greater London Council. And it has led to the introduction of the controversial flat-rate poll tax on 1 April 1989 in Scotland and on 1 April 1990 in England.

These changes have been accompanied by a growth in hostility between central and local government and by the creation of a climate of uncertainty. Few believe that the present structure of local government, so recently introduced, or the system of finance, even more recently introduced, will survive the next decade.

Despite – or perhaps because of – this hostile environment, local authorities have proved more innovative than ever before in securing advantage for their communities, in developing a concerted strategy for their areas, in developing partnerships with the private sector and other agencies, and in setting an agenda of common concern for those in their area. If their role as providers of services has diminished, their influence

as enablers has grown. They are more responsive to consumer demands and see their role increasingly as tempering the effect of market forces locally.

Two decades of reform

In 1974 local government in England and Wales was restructured on a comprehensive basis, following the deliberations of a Royal Commission chaired by Lord Redcliffe-Maud. Although the Royal Commission had in general recommended a one-tier, unitary, system, the Conservative Government chose a two-tier system throughout the country. The allocation of powers between the two tiers differed between rural and urban areas, with the county councils in rural areas delivering the majority of services. The converse was true in the metropolitan areas, and the metropolitan county councils deployed strategic services like police, public transport, fire and strategic planning. The structure in the metropolitan areas corresponded approximately to that created a decade earlier in London, where the Greater London Council exercised strategic functions. The organization of local government in Scotland followed in 1975, and was again based on a two-tier principle.

Underlying these reorganizations was the assumption that local authorities are principally deliverers of services and that they should be self-sufficient in the services which they deliver. There was held to be a minimum population size below which authorities could not go without inefficiencies. There was reluctance to create authorities with populations substantially below 250,000. In rural areas parish councils provided a local tier of representation but in the majority of metropolitan areas this tier did not exist.

In retrospect the new structure suffered from its introduction at the tail-end of modernism, just as this was disintegrating into post-modernism. People had lost faith in delivery of services by an omniscient bureaucracy, at a time when more power was being delivered to it.

The two great theories (comprehensive planning and the garden city) which underpinned the rational approach to urban governments had become discredited through misuse. The enlightenment-spawned town planning, which had produced Bath, Regent Street, the town centres of Liverpool and Huddersfield, was used in the 1960s to produce high-rise flats, the urban motorway, concrete town centres, and vandal-ridden housing estates. Ebenezer Howard's vision of garden cities degenerated into the flight to suburbia. Improved transport patterns encouraged commuting. Pressures to live in the countryside destroyed that which prompted the desire, as creeping development obliterated green fields in those areas which eschewed planned expansion. Out-of-town developments robbed the inner cities of their rationale, leaving behind

acute pressures on Victorian infrastructure, coupled with the loss of the cities' financial base.

The structural reforms in local government sounded the 'last post' of rational planning, introduced past its time. The reforms coincided not only with the growth of scepticism in all forms of government and in strategic planning, but also with an end to the growth in population and an even more dramatic end to the post-war economic boom. Exponential growth in public spending came to an end with the Labour Government in the mid-1970s. A different perception of community was at odds with the new local government structure. Conservation and concern for the environment replaced macro-planning. Zoning of cities by planners into distinct residential, industrial, commercial and leisure sectors was seen as robbing them of their dynamism and their capacity for adaptation to changing situations. A concern for the removal of non-conforming uses was replaced by the encouragement of small businesses.

The style of relationships between local and central government changed during the 1970s. Compulsion replaced the former consensual relationship in which central government had attempted to wield influence through exhortation and financial incentives. Although there had been divisions in the 1960s on housing and education, more deeply-rooted conflicts arose on education, housing, finance and cheap fares. The conflicts were usually accentuated by differences in political control between central and local government. Local government responded to the conflict by an increased politicization, with a firmer commitment to party manifestos and policy definition.The most bitter conflicts arose over local government finance, where local government pressures to continue increases in spending conflicted with Treasury determination to contain the overall level of public expenditure.

Under Conservative government 1979-1987

The Conservative Government which replaced Labour in 1979 introduced a series of attempts to reduce the role of the welfare state and the powers of local government. Tenants of 'council housing' (public housing) were given the 'right to buy'; some types of service, hitherto handled exclusively by local authority direct labour, were required to be put out to tender; direct labour organizations had to show a specific rate of return; competition was introduced to public transport; and a more restrictive regime in education began.

But the major struggle of the 1980s was the attempt by central government to restrict local government spending. The 1980 Local Government Planning and Land Act gave central government a new power over a reformed central grant system – the power to change the formulae used for distributing grants to local authorities. This change enabled

central government to manipulate the distribution of grants according to political priorities, by changing the weighting given to certain factors such as single parent families.

Central government later introduced a penalty system, so that if a local authority increased its spending above a certain level it lost grant progressively. In its ultimate development, loss of grant could mean an increase of £9 in a local authority's call on the rates for every £1 of spending. The penalty system proved legally complex, and each year additional legislation had to be introduced to block loopholes and tighten controls. Eventually, in 1985, the Government started to 'rate cap' the rates levied by authorities whose spending was judged to be 'excessive'.

The measures were strikingly unsuccessful. Between 1980 and 1988 local government's share of expenditure in the Gross National Product fell only from 10.5 per cent to 10.4 per cent. Manpower (excluding law and order, where there was an increase of 15 per cent) increased marginally. This was despite a sharp cut in the level of central grants, which fell to 44.2 per cent of local government net spending in 1988/89, having been as high as 66 per cent in the mid-1970s. The level of the rates increased accordingly, at a time when local authorities found it increasingly difficult to deliver services to meet growing social need and public demand. High inflation and the non-buoyant nature of the rates increased public perception of the rise in the annual bill. The fundamental source of conflict was the failure of local government to share the Prime Minister's commitment to minimalization of local government activity.

As a major gesture of impatience, in 1986 the second Thatcher Government abolished the Greater London Council and the six metropolitan county councils, all Labour-controlled. The two-tier system of local government continued in the rest of the country, but the great urban areas were without a strategic tier. The services delivered by the former metropolitan authorities: police (outside London), fire, public transport, waste disposal and others mostly continued at county level, supervised by joint boards of district council members. At the same time, the powers of local authorities to deliver public transport services, provide airports, run the police prosecution service and to be represented on regional water authorities were also removed. Local government representation on school boards was limited and certain educational activities were transferred to central government's Manpower Services Commission. Task forces of civil servants from central government were created in the major cities to co-ordinate urban policy, bypassing local government.

Resources for new housing were transferred from local authorities to the Housing Corporation, a central government quango.

The eight years of onslaught on local government between 1979 and 1987 left spending as well as attitudes intact. The Thatcher Government, in its third term, detonated a series of changes far more strategic in scope than those which preceded them. A further series of statutes affecting local government (now more than sixty in number since 1979) fundamentally changed not merely the relationship between central and local government, but also the philosophical base of local government. They also changed the philosophy of paying for it.

Cast in the same mould of principle were changes in delivery of local authority services, in the fields of education, housing, direct labour and social services. They affected the authorities' internal structures and procedures and included further fundamental changes in the financing of local government.

The changes in education, accomplished in 1988, altered both the relationship between local and central government and the powers of the former in relation to its educational establishments. For the first time, there is to be a national curriculum and a national system of testing pupils. Local education authorities must delegate budgets to schools and colleges, according to a formula approved by the Secretary of State. The proportion of funding retained by the local authority for discretionary spending is limited by the Secretary of State to ten per cent. School and college governors become responsible for their institutions, in place of the local authority. The school governing body decides on the appointment and dismissal of staff. Schools are given the option to opt out of local authority control and become independent establishments, directly funded by the Secretary of State, who recovers the appropriate proportion of grant from the local authority. The Secretary of State makes direct capital and specific grants to such schools (known as 'grant maintained').

The rights of parents to choose schools for their children are strengthened, and parents must have available to them statistics on performance which will inform their choice. The intention is that schools will compete in a market for children. Since financing is formula-driven, loss of pupils will reduce the revenue of the school. So far, only fifty schools (out of 25,000) have chosen to opt for grant-maintained status, but the government is introducing further inducements to increase that number.

The role of the local authority has also been diminished in the field of housing. Supplementing existing right-to-buy provisions, local authority tenants are given the right to choose an alternative landlord. This can be a housing association, a tenants' co-operative or a private landlord, following a ballot by the residents. Local authorities themselves are allowed to transfer their property to housing associations or private landlords.

A substantial change in the housing finance system moves housing rents towards market rents by reducing government subsidies. The government has created new quangos, Housing Action Trusts, which may take over entire estates. Again the legislation is intended to promote choice, a market in public housing, and a reduction in direct service provision by local authorities.

Compulsory competitive tendering for local authority services has been extended to parks maintenance, school catering, street cleaning, building cleaning, and the management of local authority leisure facilities. A local authority's discretion to choose a contractor is severely limited and 'contract compliance' provisions are outlawed. Central government has the power to intervene if a council appears to have awarded a contract to its own labour force unfairly, and it also has the power to close down a direct labour organization. A similar provision will put waste disposal activities into the competitive arena. Although 80 per cent of contracts have so far been won by direct service organizations, even in these cases the local authority's relationship has changed to that of a purchaser of internally-provided services, based on a tight specification.

More recently, legislation ended the arbitrary division of responsibility for community care, where social security funding gives a strong bias towards private residential care. Local authorities were originally to be entrusted with this responsibility, on condition that they became purchasers of care services rather than monopolistic providers. Social services were to assess need, and then arrange the appropriate package of care by purchase or agreement. Local authority community care plans would need central government approval. A separate inspectorate would undertake the regulatory function. Despite the bias away from direct service provision, local government greeted this unique accretion of powers with acclaim and a new surge of hope. Sadly, the reform was postponed as part of a package of financial measures (intended to reduce the effect of the poll tax) in the summer of 1990. Although the proposals are still intended to proceed after a transitional period, there is a growing fear that the Government may fail to implement the package that it has legislated. If, however, it is implemented it will again change the authority's role from direct provider to the predominant role of enabler.

In 1989 the Government legislated on the internal procedures of local authorities. The Local Government and Housing Act 1989 restricted the political activity of local authority staff, insisted on political balance on committees (a most inconvenient requirement for the many authorities that operated majority-party-only committees) and took power to lay down standing orders regulating the internal procedures of local authorities. The Act also invests specific statutory powers in a monitoring officer in each local authority whose job it is to report on any action by the council likely to break the law. Power to report on the management and coordination of the authority is also invested in the head of the council's paid service.

In 1988 chief finance officers were given power to report on budgetary impropriety. Community charge registration officers must be provided by councils with staff, resources and accommodation. For the first time therefore, local authorities must treat some of their own officers at arm's length, when the officers use the direct statutory powers entrusted to them. The powers change the nature of the relationship between a council and its employees.

The main financial changes, introduced in April 1990, are beyond the scope of this topic, but they have had the most profound effect on local government in the UK. The non-domestic rate is nationalized and now forms part of the finance made available by the Government to local authorities through its financing mechanism. As a result, the system of government grants has been substantially revised and is now based on a Standard Spending Assessment, decided in theory to ensure that a uniform poll tax can be set if the authority spends at the Government prescribed level. Most fundamentally, the domestic rate has been replaced by a flat-rate poll tax with certain rebates. The new system has resulted in a substantial redistribution of resources on a fairly arbitrary basis. In general the most disadvantaged authorities are the higher-spending urban areas in London and the north of England.

The levels of poll tax in England vary between £148 and £559 per annum. The differential is accounted for by the high gearing between spending and poll tax, as a result of the high proportion of Government funding. Although the new system is designed to promote direct accountability, it is hedged about with a series of transitional grants which make its operation extremely complex. Moreover, the Government intervened in 1990-91 to limit the level of community charge levied by 21 authorities. For 1991/92 the Government will announce its capping rules in advance, thus effectively capping every authority. The results of capping in 1990/91 have required some authorities to introduce very severe cuts in services. At the same time, the Government has changed the basis of control of capital spending (from spending to borrowing) and has increased its own powers in terms of distribution of 'credit approvals' and of authorities' rights to use receipts from the sale of assets.

In one last major structural change, the Government in 1990 abolished the Inner London Education Authority, the last vestige of the old London County Council that was abolished 25 years ago. The twelve inner London boroughs and the City of London have become education authorities. At the same time, polytechnics throughout the country were removed from local government and transferred to the control of a centrally-appointed quango.

The impact of the changes

This formidable tide of change not only shifts the private/public sector boundary but also changes the culture of the remainder of the public sector. Given that some services will remain in the public sector, the Government believes that they must be delivered in a different way. Underlying the changes is a firm commitment to undermine corporate bureaucratic power and rational planning. The Government is firmly committed to the view that the market is better able to determine needs than a local council. Schools will be able to compete for pupils; the local authority will have to work hard to retain its housing tenants; and internal service providers will have to compete with the private sector for contracts. The democracy of the market will replace representative democracy.

The Government distrusts the public service (and professional) ethic as a dissimulation of inefficient cartels and an abuse of monopoly power. As the private sector uses monopolistic powers to increase profits so, it is argued, the public sector uses monopolies to reduce throughput or increase professional satisfaction at the expense of users.

Competition is to be preferred to the public service. If no genuine market exists, then a simulated internal market must be created. As Adam Smith pointed out, it is not the entry of a competitor in the market that changes norms, but the possible entry of a competitor. If organizations are uncompetitive, eventually a competitor will arrive. The change in attitude is propelling public sector agencies into their own market simulation by the spread of service-level agreements in local government. Direct service organizations, compelled to compete, seek freedom themselves to enter the market for support services or, if this is seen to undermine corporate culture too far, to specify the service they receive from central support departments, whose overheads might otherwise undermine their competitiveness.

The moves have been heavily criticized. In the absence of bureaucratic protection it is feared that specialist further education courses serving special needs will collapse; that opting for grant maintained status is a backdoor way of recreating selective schools; that unpopular schools which cannot be closed because they provide essential capacity will become unviable and unable to offer a full range of options; that sink schools will result; and that council housing will become a residential welfare provision. The search for individual good will replace the search for collective good. The articulate will benefit and the inarticulate suffer, or so it is argued.

Despite these fears, local government managers seem to have imbibed the competitive culture. They are fighting to compete and are doing so innovatively. Competitive tendering – or more precisely specification for the first time of the services to be delivered – provides an opportunity for

differentiation of service and supply. In particular, it provides an opportunity for consumers to pay an additional charge for a higher level of service. Geographic differentiation is an option now being sought.

Underpinning all Government thinking on the public sector is the need to separate the roles of purchaser and provider. An independent regulator may be needed where the split does not comfortably give adequate controls. In local government many functions (like schools, transport, airports and direct service organizations) now function at arm's length from the local authority. The councils themselves have not been slow to pick up the message. A combination of financial stringency, lack of statutory powers and the need to overcome bureaucratic constraints has prompted more than half the local authorities in England to set up their own companies. They are now forced to put these at arm's length by legislation in 1989, failing which their companies would come within the ambit of the local authority's own financial system, so bringing them within central government control. Local authorities are now working through a whole medley of partnerships with the private sector, or by contracts or understandings with voluntary bodies, in an attempt to procure advantage for their residents.

This positive result is undermined by crumbling infrastructure, cuts in services and a demoralized workforce.

New issues, links and mechanisms

Despite widespread gloom at the declining standard of local government services, the reforms have succeeded in changing the culture of municipal government. Paradoxically, the changes have shifted the emphasis from efficiency and economy to the third and neglected 'e', effectiveness. A major consequence of the changes instituted by central government has been to free the time of councillors from routine administrative and managerial business. Their agendas need not be circumscribed by the bureaucratic needs of the service departments with which their committees were associated. Managers also are freed from the routine management of their departments, which so often took away the opportunity for strategic thought. This freedom from routine creates time not only to look for alternative means of delivery of services but also to scan wider horizons. The concept of municipal management has moved from an introspective view of the organization to a holistic view of the surrounding environment, an ironic consequence of the Government's distrust of bureaucratic planning.

Local authorities are beginning to address issues in which their statutory services play only a part. The fragmentation of agencies created as a result of the Government's dislike of centralized bureaucratic planning requires overall policymaking. This fragmentation gives municipal authorities an

opportunity – even the necessity – to assume the mantle of co-ordination. The Government-appointed Audit Commission has canvassed the idea of 'regeneration audits' in the inner cities, audits in which all actors will be involved by the local authority, in order to establish a common agenda of concern and a concerted plan of action.

Thus derogation of local government corporatism may paradoxically increase the local authority's role, though at the expense of the direct supply of services. Cordial relationships have been established in areas where, a few years ago, there was only hostility. In the classic case of Sheffield, an era of hostility between the Chamber of Commerce and the City Council ended when the Chairman of the one and the Leader of the other discovered that they had more in common than in conflict. A concordat was concluded which has made the new Sheffield a byword for partnership. Throughout the country, local authorities are increasingly engaged in building relationships with bodies whose efforts can complement their own. With an enlarged vision of their role, they seek to influence agencies which affect areas in which they have concern, such as the environment. In turn, the private sector has become aware of its own need to influence and work with the local authority, as a key to economic success. It needs the thrust of the local authority in areas like planning, education and environmental improvement.

The strategy of coalition building has caught on in local government. Allies are sought in unlikely places. The disliked Urban Development Corporations (quangos invested with regeneration powers in inner city areas) and the encroaching Training and Enterprise Councils (responsible for local training and employment schemes) are being colonized or regarded pragmatically as partners. The Audit Commission is coming to be seen as a benefit rather than a burden. Its comparative statistics are increasingly used by local authorities; its value-for-money studies consistently highlight the frustrations and inefficiencies caused by central government's meddling, and the distortions caused by government financial systems. Academic institutions and think-tanks of the right and left now feature the local government agenda. Major local authorities and regions seek European partners with common interests, in order to besiege the European Commission with requests for money or friendly policies. The Commission itself is seen as a major ally on the side of local government against central government.

Competition has strengthened the existing trend towards consumer responsiveness. Local authorities take marketing initiatives towards consumers which further develop local government's closeness to its residents. The growing readiness of the public to take collective protective action, either by formal opposition through the statutory processes or by harassing the media, will prompt local authorities to further sensitivity in their relationship to residents.

In the environmental field, pressure groups are increasingly seen by local government as agents to accomplish objectives rather than as obstructions to progress. Local authorities try increasingly to involve the public in the actual delivery of services. Encouragement of family care is a vital part of the new community care regime. Indeed this major new responsibility for local authorities, if it takes place, will prompt a whole raft of new relationships, requiring careful networking with health authorities, general practitioners, residential home proprietors, and the Department of Social Security – as well as other local authority departments like education, leisure and housing.

Public sector strategists now establish a range of mechanisms to influence strategic allies and to seek synergy. The diminished scale of operational management creates an opportunity for greater co-ordination and synthesis of influence. Planning and development control powers are used to achieve a variety of organizational objectives. Purchasing is used in a more pointed manner. As well as working through contract and agreement, local authorities seek to use their own landholdings constructively. They are prepared to volunteer consultancy expertise in appropriate cases, and to inject judicious supplies of finance into appropriate organizations. Public relations are now used more skilfully and more purposefully.

The imaginative deployment of resources in these ways calls for the concentration by local authorities of resources at the boundaries of the organization, looking outwards. Traditionally a role of the chief executive in his ambassadorial capacity, responsibilities are now being spread more widely. Providers, of course, need to be under constant scrutiny by the purchasing agencies. Programmed monitoring systems must be created that will highlight any deficiency in their provision. Networked systems, like those between community care managers, the health service, general practitioners and other local authority services, must also be monitored in terms of finance (where budgets will increasingly be pooled between agencies) and also in terms of output. There is a constant need to monitor the attitudes of consumers and their needs. Ephemeral shifts in public taste have to be recognized, even if not catered for. The public has to be kept on-side.

The use of information technology for consumer interface has hardly been developed in the UK, but over the next ten years it will make a major impact on the delivery of local government services. Local authorities will use information technology for interactive exchanges as well as for dissemination of information. The introduction of cable television in Britain presents a major opportunity.

New purchaser requirements will also require new linkages: community care workers will need effective on-line interchange with their various providers. Monitoring of clinical outcomes requires exchange of data between consultants and general practitioners. Decentralized budget

holders will need to communicate regularly with the centre. The new health management regime will require the recording, gathering and syndication of data in a much more systematic way. In this field local government enjoys an enormous advantage, because of its already comprehensive database. Once the potential for the use of that base is realized through improved communications, the influence of the local authority as data possessor can be used to great advantage. Selective data exchange with key participants can greatly change the latter's perception of their responsibilities. For example, communication by the police to the local authority of crime statistics broken down by geographical location and type of crime can have a marked effect on a local authority's own programmes.

Indeed, the police forces have been among the first organizations to perceive the benefits of syndicated knowledge, the enlistment of allies and the harnessing of public opinion. Capitalizing on the favourable public opinion of the police, they have used these attitudes to harness public support towards crime prevention (or at least prevention of the fear of crime, which they rightly identify as being almost as great a problem).

How durable is the new concept of strategic management?

The process of management renovation serves a vital purpose in shaking up an organization, but the revolution is incapable of perpetuation indefinitely. The bureaucracy takes over; comfort dominates until the next leader becomes committed to the need for a further shake-up. Every system becomes obsolete and must be changed before it ossifies.

The attraction of the purchaser/provider split is that, in theory, it avoids these recurrent traumas, and builds in a constant re-examination of activities. With the divorce of purchasers from providers, a major vested interest in bureaucratic comfort is eliminated. A core of purchasing strategists, with alternative sources of provision theoretically available, can maximize their own comfort by constant pressure on providers, as the purchasers react to financial stringency, political and consumer pressures.

Each round of contract negotiations imposes an implied duty on the purchasers to improve on the previous round in terms of cost effectiveness, quality differentiation and responsiveness. Even when competition is largely non-existent, each new round of negotiation will automatically prompt a re-examination of the delivery of service. As well as concentration on the increase of output and effectiveness, there should also be a growing concentration on quality.

The providers will also have a regular incentive to review their own activities – partly because of the pressure on them by purchasers, but also because of the desire to keep financial gains within their own organization. For the private provider these will result in increased profits. For the

public sector provider they could produce increases in performance-related pay or free cash for development.

The specification of outputs should in theory move the debate away from the narrow concepts of efficiency and economy into effectiveness. It should sharpen the debate on the measurement of outputs and on the definition of the true objectives of a service. Planners should constantly re-examine the needs of their consumers and consider alternative strategies to meet those needs. In some cases these strategies could dispense with the need for service delivery altogether. Purchasers should be led towards marketing strategies which change the perceived needs, so as to avoid expensive service delivery. They will try to engineer changes in social behaviour, exemplified by crime prevention, or by anti-drugs and anti-litter campaigns.

Such at least is the theory of the brave new world. It has certainly gripped the imagination of managers in municipal government, who have gulped large draughts of the new wisdom. The purchaser/provider split gives managers a new precision in objectives. The incompatibility of professional training with ultimate management responsibilities has always been a theme of critics of the professional base of UK local government.

The purchaser/provider split is probably politically robust, though it is often inconvenient for politicians to have to choose clear priorities and set precise targets. Every decision in a period of contraction is certain to upset someone. Making rationing decisions explicit will inevitably increase the pressure for greater spending. Politicians as well as managers will be made more accountable. The system will sharpen the democratic process. Already, conflicts between cuts in spending and cuts in services caused by the introduction of the poll tax have prompted local election turnouts in some boroughs to rise to general election levels.

The new role of municipal government

The new concept of holistic strategic municipal management has spurred municipal authorities to re-examine the role of the city. Industrial restructuring and the removal of geographical constraints have compelled a redefinition of the *raison d'être* of urban areas. Municipal councils have begun to transform them into centres of entertainment, culture, consumption and professional services. Acutely aware that they are competing with other European cities, an attractive image has been sought. Cultural flagships have been launched, like the Alhambra in Bradford, the Glasgow Opera House and the Manchester Royal Exchange. Birmingham has produced its Exhibition Centre and Gateshead its Metro Centre. Transitory events like the Sheffield Student Games and the biennial garden festivals have been sought. Heritage areas like Liverpool's Albert Docks and London's Covent Garden have been created. A museum

is launched in England every two or three weeks. Improvement of the environment is seen as a key element in competition, as well as having an impact on the quality of life of residents.

Local authorities have been compelled to take these actions to maintain the city as an entity, since information technology has removed the constant need for interaction. The restructuring of industry and commuting has removed the need for concentrations of housing adjacent to labour-intensive industry. It remains to be seen whether these spectacular developments will generate wealth which can impact on the problems of poverty, homelessness, education and health – and whether adequate financial mechanisms will be in place to enable the local authorities to tap that wealth.

A variety of other issues are being grasped by UK municipalities. They are taking a greater interest in the activities of their local health authorities, impinging as the latter do on so many municipal programmes, because of the municipalities' holistic view of the welfare of the area. Retraining of workers to survive the next industrial revolution is a key topic. The phenomenon of the 'third age' is being addressed. So is the UK demographic time bomb, decreasing the number of 16 to 19 year olds by one-quarter in less than one decade and multiplying the incidence of the very old even more sharply. Integrated environmental strategies are being prepared and implemented in conjunction with major public participation. Municipal authorities are looking corporately at the impact of new forms of service delivery and information technology on their own staff. Many municipalities have embarked on decentralization of service delivery or decision-taking.

Both bureaucratic planning and decentralized management have equity as a goal. The market does not, and in the next decade equity will surely resurface as an issue. An economic development strategy does not necessarily help the underprivileged (exemplified by the startling developments in the London Docklands which have polarized communities sharply). The planning system itself brings winners and losers. Are the losers the general losers in society? How can true equality in access to services be obtained? The local authority has a role in sorting out local conflict. The private sector itself (developers and financial institutions) have come to believe firmly in the promotional effects of planning and are spurring local authorities into a more positive role. The catastrophic comprehensive developments of the 1960s are being rebuilt or revamped. There is a revival of belief in overall land use planning and its necessary links with transport, after four years without strategic authorities in the metropolitan areas.

Since issues such as these permeate the community, it can be expected that local authorities will react, corporately and through public participation, as they go through the stages of assessment, planning, implementation, monitoring and regulation. As a result, municipalities will

reschedule their structures away from the delivery of services and towards strategic objectives, such as the local economy, the environment, demographic change, service quality and equality of access. Local authorities are beginning to address the concept of differentiated services. What does consumer choice mean in the delivery of service? Can the elderly choose from a menu of community care services? Should the resident be able to choose a standard of refuse collection, perhaps paying more for an improved service? The National Health Service has begun to involve patients in their care plans. How can these developments be replicated in local government? How can the rhetoric of customer choice be translated into action? The marketeers plug freedom and choice. The challenge to municipalities is to keep these after the marketeers have disappeared. Local democratic sensitivities can provide a middle ground between the market and the central delivery of uniform services. The job of the municipality is to temper market forces, and ensure choice for those to whom it would otherwise be denied.

Conclusion

This new concentration on the overall needs of the city is an agenda which has been assimilated by an exciting new generation of council members (of all parties) and chief executives. They have moved away from the concept of corporate power into the manipulation of a diaspora of influence. They see the local authority role as much more than a machine for the direct delivery of a uniform set of services to an homogenous population. The council should be the focus of community government. A strategic capacity is being created.

In this shifting scene of strategic management there is considerable pain and discomfort for the managers of municipal services. Older council members have traditionally had a special affinity with service delivery and feel betrayed by its removal. Officers are now polarized between strategists, purchasers and providers. Those who have been associated with the delivery of uniform solutions will find it difficult to adjust to the delivery of responsive and variable services. But the overall consequence of this new role for the public sector may result in the strengthening of responsible municipal government, as consumers seek a locally responsive body capable not only of the sensitive delivery of collective goods, but also of preserving and improving their living environment.

Many mistakes have been made in the governance of cities in the last few decades. Lessons have been assimilated by the new municipal managers, who are more humble as a result. As local government throws off paternalism and moves towards the differentiation of services, with equity in access and delivery, municipalities can step in to cater for that

which the market neglects. Municipal government can secure the public services which the market cannot provide.

Postscript (April 1991)

Since this piece was written a further hurricane has ripped through the body politic in the UK, with local government being in the eye of the storm. The preamble to this article forecast that the poll tax, *soi-disant* community charge, would soon tumble, together with the structure of local government. Within months (and less than a year from the poll tax's introduction in England) the system has been abandoned, sweeping away with its debris Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, and inserting as Secretary of State for the Environment her opponent Michael Heseltine.

The new financial system, if Conservatives win the general election, will be based on a combination of property and poll tax on an as yet unspecified basis. in the interim, value added tax has been increased by 2½ per cent to reduce poll tax bills by £140 per head, in many cases after the bills themselves had been issued. In a low poll tax area like Wandsworth this means that residents get a free ride; local services are financed entirely out of national revenues.

Meanwhile the Government plans further centralization of functions. Further education, including sixth form colleges, is to be stripped from local government and handed over to a quango. Secondary schools are to be transferred to government control within five years. The careers service may be removed. A new commission will look at local government structure, with a view to creating a one-tier structure more widely. And new models of internal working for local authorities are canvassed – notably including elected chief executives.

Sadly, I see no reason to change the wording of the introduction. These changes promise no more stability than the present system. Instability will continue for as long as there is no consensus on the real role and functions of local government in the UK.

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10 Is Responsible Municipal Government an Illusion or a Reality?

Marion Dewar

Under the present structures in Canada, municipal government cannot be a responsible government. Having said that, it does not mean that responsible government at the municipal level is not desirable or possible.

Municipalities in Canada are creatures of the provinces. They do not have a place in the constitution. The elected municipal councils do not officially represent any of the registered national political parties.

Accountability is probably the most important factor in maintaining responsible democratic government. Accountability can only be obtained with comprehensible, consistent organization. We do not have responsible municipal governments at the moment, but I do not think that this is an impossibility. Not only is it possible but it is also desirable and we need the political will to make it happen.

The debates that have taken place around the constitution have not considered the inclusion of municipalities as a constitutionally defined entity of government. Unfortunately, the lobby to include municipalities has been weak and has generally been seen as a small group of self-interested municipal politicians.

Services that are the responsibility of local municipalities are waste management, water and sewers, public transportation, recreation, libraries, urban planning and education. In some provinces, this responsibility also extends to health services and social services. We have elected school boards, many energy boards and even recreation boards. This network of elected boards diffuses the responsibility for decision making. Local

citizens are often confused about where the responsibility lies. A responsible municipal government should be under one elected council. The members elected would suffice in number to share the workload of the numerous services and responsibilities. There would not be a question in the citizens' minds as to who the local representative is. Some may ask how the priorities would be set to deal with education, urban planning, waste management, transportation, etc.. There would need to be a strong committee system. These committees would have budgets, monitor delivery of services and report to the elected council. Prior to the election of such a council, there would be a discussion of the service delivery, the budgets and priority setting. We would begin to have a population that understood the programmes at the local level.

Canada has a respectable record in voter participation in elections. This record is higher at the national level than at the provincial level. However, at the municipal level, the participation is dismal. This fact contributes to the weak lobby.

The vast geography of this country makes it difficult to have homogeneous structures. A constitution could design municipal structures that respect the diversity of the country and, at the same time, be held accountable to a national vision.

Many of the changes taking place in society during the past few decades have first been apparent at the local level. Local economies often reflect the realities of national policies without ever being acknowledged as a place to begin the national analysis. Population distribution, land development, employment, food distribution, environmental issues, housing, education and health are all issues that are obvious at the local level.

If Canada is to develop a system of responsible government at the municipal level, there must be major changes to the constitution. Political structures must be put in place to hold municipal councillors accountable for their policies. Moreover, the system must be easily understood by the population.

There must be an acknowledgement in our constitution that the economies and population of many of our cities include large sophisticated bureaucratic organizations that have the capacity to take responsibility for the welfare of their residents. It is difficult at the present time for municipalities to take actions to assure the wellbeing of their communities, without the support of the provincial governments. Some of these policies need the permission and approval of the province e.g. official plans, welfare programmes, education, etc.. Municipal structures are often complex. There is a plethora of boards, commissions and councils at the local level. These are often used to demonstrate how democratic local governments are, but in reality, this is a myth. The organizations are complex. Citizens must specialize in one area if they are to advocate and monitor policies. These policies are interdependent and a citizen

interested in public policy and public participation recognizes the interdependence. Unfortunately, because the ability for comprehensive advocacy becomes impossible, they often give up in frustration.

At the present time, a province with a population of 135,000 is more influential at the national table, negotiating transfer payments than a city with a population of two million that is not represented at the national table. If municipalities were recognized as an official level of government within the constitution, they would be at the table with the other two levels that are presently there. I do not see this as adding to the difficulties of governing this vast diverse country. Instead, it would enhance the process, share power, improve the decision making and remove the ability for any province, that is not necessarily representative of the Canadian people, to hold the rest of the country up for ransom.

It follows that if responsibility were delegated in such a manner, politics would have to be organized around a party structure. Some would argue for municipal party structures. These already exist in some Canadian municipalities. However, the reality is that the municipal party structures that do exist are mostly associated with the existing national parties. I would argue that to make the system understandable and accessible for the greater majority, it is important that all levels reflect a somewhat similar identity and political structure. Many municipalities would design vastly different programmes for their vicinities. The similarity in needs of our populations in northern Ontario and northern Quebec for education, employment or environmental protection quickly comes to mind. The need of these communities are very different from the needs in communities in the south of these provinces.

In Canada, at the present time, many programmes delivered by municipal governments or boards of education are cost-shared by transfer payments from the federal level to the provincial level. The federal government has little say in what the final programmes are. The local government has the responsibility to deliver, but it has no role in the original design of the programmes or the budget commitments.

We must have a political structure that represents Canadians in a similar fashion. The policies adopted by one political party at one level should be consistent by that same party at other levels. Too often, we have had the experience of voting for a specific policy locally, and had it eroded and contradicted at another level because a party policy which is consistent at all levels of government does not exist. It is becoming more evident that people everywhere want to have a say in how they are governed. The problems of our planet are enormous. There is a necessity for individuals to have some control on decisions so that there will be solutions available to solve existing problems. The dissolution of the barriers between Eastern and Western Europe demonstrates this. The growing cynicism about politicians in Western society is a symptom of how people feel disenfranchised.

Responsible government is a major component in solving some of the environmental problems. If a local council is elected to reduce waste and increase recycling, and if that same local council is made up of a group of persons who have agreed to work on this issue at pre-election time, they will have the consensus of the public to proceed and implement public policies that will achieve this goal. If public transportation is seen as a need, all the elements to put together a transportation system that would enable people to get to work, go to school or go shopping could be assembled into a workable solution. Only when the decision makers are clearly accountable to the community will we be able to have a system that deals with environmental protection and services to consumers, adults and children alike. The present system does not connect municipal policies with provincial or federal policies. The responsible manner to connect these policies is to have political parties represented at each level of government. There is no point in handing to the local people a token structure allowing them to administer programmes, which will make them feel that there is local power, if the resource decisions have been given to another level. To liberate communities, we must put real choices in the hands of the people who are elected by that community. The country could come alive with urban planning reflecting the culture and needs of our diverse land. Education curricula could reflect not only the diversity, but the richness of the multiculture we so often only give lip service to. Health services could reflect a variety of models. Some of these could stress prevention, others could look at community-based delivery, while others could look at appropriate institution model delivery. Employment programmes and economic development could use many of the existing skills that are in the communities at present.

Experiences could be rich and diverse. We, as a country, could have a wealth of examples to draw from. The wise saying of 'acting locally and thinking globally' could be translated into a wonderful national experience. The goals of the programmes would be national but the method of delivery would be local.

Some of these suggestions may sound tremendously idealistic. We should go back to the original question 'Is responsible municipal government an illusion or a reality?'. If we ask the question seriously, it is important that we look at the structures that are obstacles in allowing responsible government. I am convinced that the reason that we have such a dismal participation in the election of our local governments is because the system is complex and to a great degree powerless. Most countries have gone the route of establishing their political national parties at the local level with the expectation that this would achieve responsible government. In my opinion, this is just tinkering. Our modern society has changed dramatically since the conception of local government in Canada. We are a young country and we exist for a variety of reasons. We have had tremendous difficulty in dealing with our constitution. The agony and the

stress has been real. The inclusion of municipalities in our constitution could have the effect of shifting the debate from 'How do we use our traditional procedures to amend our governing bodies to solve our present problems?' to 'There is a need to look at all our present structures. Are they sufficient to solve our present problems? Do we need to discover new and empowering procedures for a well educated population to be able to participate in amending our governing bodies?' The inclusion of municipal government in the constitution would not solve all our structural problems. It would shift the public debate and require us to look critically at all of our present structures.

Responsible government will not come about at the local level unless we are serious about genuine reform. We must include all elements of the population in considering that reform. Then, and only then, will the citizens not only understand it but they will have ownership of the new structure and they will be anxious to participate in electing their representatives.

The huge challenge of protecting our planet means we must deal seriously with the environmental issues. These include waste management, water pollution, daily transportation of people, industrial waste, urban planning. Urban planning alone incorporates so many of the solutions or the problems in the future. People are becoming more aware of the need to relate local decision to national and international decisions. Responsible local government will add to the solutions of our global problems. Local governments, elected on a platform that must have public debate and scrutiny, forces public policy to be accountable. This will only happen if political structures have consistency at all levels of governments in a nation. It will not reduce tensions between the levels of government but it will allow for vigorous debate and better public policy.

Summary of Discussions

Ian Jackson

The preceding papers were presented at a colloquium, and this volume should therefore reflect the ensuing discussions. What follows is inevitably selective and much abbreviated; it is based on a spontaneous summary given at the close of the colloquium.

First session: Cities and the Communications Revolution

Two themes seemed to pervade both the papers and the subsequent discussion:

(a) How can the communications revolution be reconciled with the human preference for direct contact: can we define this reconciliation in any way that is useful in shaping our urban future?

(b) Perhaps a subset of the above: Are these new communications options likely to weaken the influence of the major cities, or will this influence be reinforced?

On these themes, for instance, Hall suggested that 'there is an enormous difference between the present situation and what might happen in the near future'. Maffini, however, in a paper that otherwise seemed strongly oriented towards revolutionary change, remarked that 'As far as I can observe, I see little change in the underlying social amenity values

used to determine home location.' (I wonder about that: surely there have been changes in the way that the 'seven ages of man' are reflected in place of residence.)

In practical terms, Lanctôt told us what is being done in Montreal to reconcile both communications technology and the desire for human contact with access to governmental and other services. Many other cities are moving in the same direction, but Lanctôt certainly left me feeling that the successful approach (Montreal's or another city's) would be based not on providing access to specific (mainly governmental) information, but on its relevance to the daily pattern of life of the community.

Later (maybe in another session), someone reminded us that these citizen information access systems may work for the majority, but they may also contribute to widening the separation of minorities.

Very early in the discussion, Adams brought up a theme that seemed pervasive throughout the colloquium. It might be summarized as 'planning ain't what it used to be.' This was emphasized again later by Divay. To some extent it appeared to be denied by both John Hall and Ray Spaxman, who suggested that the 'old' planning still exists, and is indeed the way that visions may be developed and even realized. However, even they might agree that on to the rather simplistic notion of national, regional and local planning a much broader view has been grafted over the decades.

When pushed, Maffini argued that decentralization has been propelled less by individuals seizing options, as by corporations going after what made sense in their terms. But some dissension was evident here also.

Another theme emerged in this first session that was to be pervasive: what Marston called the 'human need for ownership of issues'. This clearly goes well beyond the human need for contact.

On Canadian/UK contrasts, Hall reminded us of the line that Britain has too much history and not enough geography, and *vice versa* in Canada. This proposition was endorsed in the Montreal context by Poirier.

At the end of the discussion, Parkinson suggested that cities are returning to their classical function as leaders and arbiters. He was evidently not terribly impressed by the people who have replaced the princes as conspicuous consumers.

Second session: Neighbourhoods: Ghettos or Cultural Mosaics?

My main impression in regard to this theme was that the speakers were, or were perceived to be, more optimistic than their audience. When I voiced this reaction, however, the speakers seemed to say that they had been misunderstood!

Robson arranged his presentation under three headings – myths, numbers and sizes, and future needs and policies. In fairness, the keyword

I have in my own notes from his presentation is 'perplexity', which may be a more normal, and perhaps more acceptable, emotion in a planner than optimism. Robson stressed the very different characteristics of the minorities issue in different British cities. He offered us a 'hot potato' in the form of a recommended policy of drug legalization. Like good Canadians, however, we refused to deal with hot potatoes.

Bedford startled us by being not merely optimistic but enthusiastic. It is only safe to enthuse about your job, at least to the extent that Bedford did, when you are far away from those who determine what your salary will be next year. He took us through the stages in Toronto's development, with special emphasis on the 1970s and 1980s. By 1990, he suggested, it was becoming a private rather than a public environment, and from the discussion this seemed to be true also of British cities.

Since Toronto is often viewed as a near-utopia among North American cities, especially by US visitors, it was interesting, though not reassuring, to be told that the city's success with neighbourhoods was largely accidental. Bedford also painted a picture of the future Toronto that was not the popular image. Finally, and again controversially, he called for a bold public vision of Toronto's future.

This need for vision was queried in the ensuing discussion. Other needs were urged as more important. We discussed the special problem of Montreal: integration to two cultures, not one.

Marston suggested that the real trouble, in terms of numbers, starts at the bottom: the ghetto is perceived as a place where people, including most of those who live there, don't want to be. We discussed optimism versus pessimism, and whether Canada really accepts the implications of the cultural mosaic. Maffini reminded us that immigrants may be more single-minded in pursuing limited objectives than planners assume.

Third session: City planning

Within a European context, Parkinson emphasized the major changes in the way we look at UK cities that took place during the 1980s. The view that private sector problems should find their solutions in the public sector had been largely reversed. Intense unevenness had emerged between regions, between cities and within cities.

By contrast, Spaxman focused on general principles, and offered some *desiderata* – or perhaps *sine qua nons* – for successful cities. The latter, he suggested, are those that are able to 'get it all together'. Parkinson had provided some spectacular examples of cities that had failed to do this.

The discussion, by this stage, was showing some signs of '*déjà vu* all over again'. One sensed that the examples used (Glasgow, Liverpool, Toronto and Vancouver especially) were familiar stuff to those who lived in the respective countries, but it was not so easy to draw conclusions that remained useful after they had crossed the Atlantic. Hall may have come

closest to such a conclusion when he suggested that the 'bottom line' was whether what elected representatives (or their officials) did made any real difference. The answer, on the evidence offered in this and the preceding session, seemed to be that their potential for positive action might be limited, but it was clear that they could do real harm. And that led us back to the usefulness of a vision.

Fourth session: Cities and Sustainable Development

In one sense, this was an obligatory session for such a colloquium in 1990, and it seemed to be taken for granted that the concept was very relevant to city futures. Looking at the problem from the perspective of the water cycle, Emery argued that the problems are essentially not technological in character, but are issues of cost and associated political will. This view was challenged to some extent in subsequent discussion, but Emery maintained his position.

Divay's presentation basically asked: How can we accelerate rates of change in our cities? This implies that we know what has to be done, or at least the general direction of necessary change. On the micro scale (e.g. tree planting, safe disposal of old household appliances), this is no doubt true. But Bedford might say that there should be an overall vision before the individual parts are tackled.

Maffini asked whether population size is critical to sustainability, but the general response was that it should not be. One item from the earlier discussion on neighbourhoods seemed relevant here: against the popular view in both countries, the concentration of new immigrants from overseas in the major cities may be a key factor in the revitalization of these cities.

The discussion generated other heresies: 'linear is beautiful', and centralization may be a better basis than decentralization for tackling environmental problems. These are obviously half-truths at best – it is easy to think of situations where they do not apply – but they were stimulating heresies nevertheless.

Fifth session: Responsible City Government

Brooke's presentation of Britain in the 1980s clearly left the Canadian participants thinking 'How different from the municipal life of our beloved towns and cities'. His basic thesis was that out of ten years of revolution has come a new sense of purpose and approach that has revitalized local governments – provided that the revolution is complete! His postscript to the paper published in this volume indicates that it is not.

The Canadians, especially those from Ottawa, will also remember his quotation of one British politician recently: 'The problem with morale in the civil service is that it is not yet low enough.'

In contrast, Dewar described a chronic Canadian situation that may have been typical of Britain before the 1980s. In particular, she explored the myth that because local government is local it is therefore more responsive. Her argument that national political parties may be vital for improved local government met some mild objections from Robson and others, but no real debate. There was however some useful semantic argument, in which the word 'oxymoron' was audible, about such terms as 'responsible municipal government' and 'market democracy'.

Still on semantics, Canadian participants learned that 'community charge' indicates approval of the present system of municipal taxation in Britain, whereas 'poll tax' clearly means disapproval. The system may however be replaced before we get the chance to use this knowledge on our next transatlantic trip. Parkinson argued that whatever one called the mechanism, it has helped to destroy a sense of community.

On the general topic of municipal finance, a plea was made for more assured financing. Canada's Treasury Board (and Mrs Thatcher, if either had been at the colloquium) would probably have responded that someone has to run tax policy and money supply, and local government has little incentive to worry about such things. Similarly, the argument that cities should be able to balance their budgets was countered by the statement that local government is basically redistributive.

Colloquium Participants

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